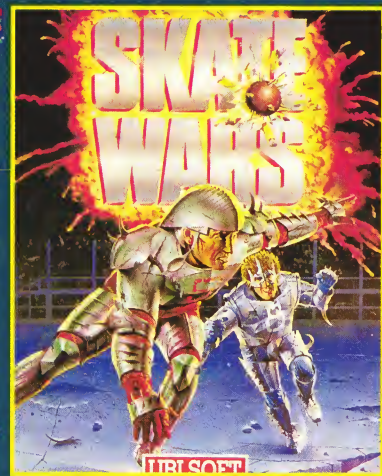


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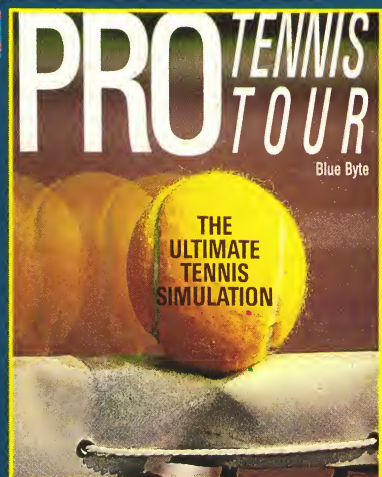
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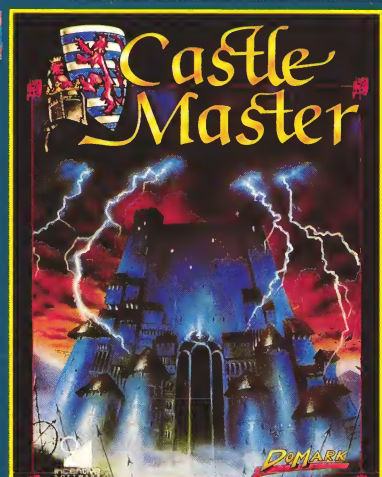
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Staff Writer Adam Peters  
Consultant Technical Editor Adam Waring  
Contributors Andy Price, Stuart Whyte, Phil Howard,  
Jerry Glenwright, Bertram Fegg  
Art Editor Angela Neal  
Additional design Maryanne Booth  
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Promotions Manager Michele Harris  
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Group Publishing Director Greg Ingham  
Production Nicola Lucas  
Subscriptions Christine Stacey, tel: 0458 74011  
Mail Order Claire Bates, tel: 0458 74011  
Circulation Director Sue Hartley, tel: 0225 442244

• **Reader calls:** Due to pressure of work, we can only accept 'phone calls from readers on Tuesday afternoons.

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# LINE UP

Get into print

16



Don't like the magazines on the newsagents' shelves? Think you could do better? Then find out how to go about producing your own fanzine...

Action Replay



**NEW SECTION!** So that we can give original budget games full-size reviews, we're incorporating them into the main Action Test section... which means a new, separate section for budget re-releases (hurrah!)

Survey special

12

Change the face of Amstrad Action!

Now's your chance to change the face of Amstrad Action as we head into 1992. The Amstrad market is changing all the time, and we aim to keep up with it. Most of all, though, we want to keep up with our readers!

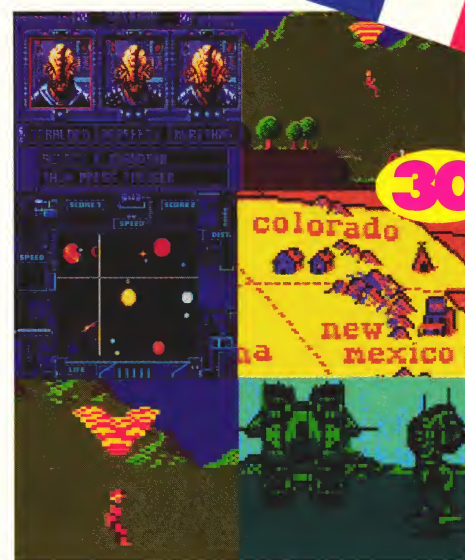
**FILL IN THIS FORM!**

All the latest CPC news... PLUS the results of our giant 1992 reader survey AND a report from this year's European Computer Trade Show

## the buyers guide Desktop publishing

To go with our special feature on fanzines this month, we give you the run-down on the best desktop publishing packages for your machine.

The French Resistance



Publishers everywhere seem to be moving away from 8-bit machines in favour of 16-bits and consoles. But not French CPC stalwart Loricel... we look at five of their latest games

Bangers and Mash

34



No, it's not what the AA team is eating for lunch. In fact it's the latest release from budget softies Alternative. Bangers and Mash are the two monkey heroes collecting fruit in a forest...

serious

- GET INTO PRINT Publishing your own fanzine could be a lot easier than you think
- PUBLIC IMAGE Adam Peters rounds up all the current CPC fanzines
- TECHNICAL FORUM Fancy yourself as a professional game programmer? Adam Waring reviews the book that could help you make it
- MASTERING MACHINE CODE More code-cracking with Andy Price
- THE WACCI PAGE Starting this month, user group Wacci presents its guide to CPC-ing
- TYPE-INS More innovative readers' programs, plus Jerry Glenwright's BASIC tutorial
- BUYERS' GUIDE Tempted by our feature on fanzines this issue? Then check out our survey of the best DTP software around

games

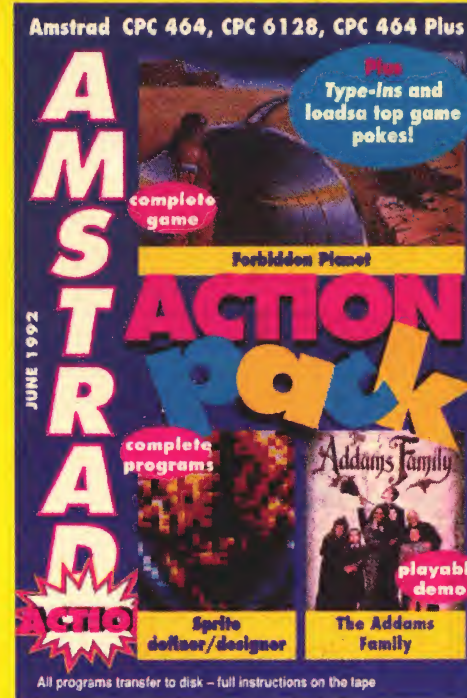
- ON THE GRAPEVINE The Addams Family may be Ocean's last ever CPC release - but it looks like the company's going out with a bang...
- TOUCHDOWN We review a new American Football sim that relies on brains not brawn
- AVALANCHE Fed up of mindless shoot-em-ups? Then this latest WW2 strategy sim from CCS may be just what you need
- THE FRENCH RESISTANCE French software house Loricel is staying loyal to the CPC
- ACTION REPLAY Starting this month: a new section devoted to budget re-releases
- BANGERS AND MASH A bit of monkey business from Alternative Software...
- CHEAT MODE This month: map for Dizzy, Prince of the Yolk Folk PLUS a complete solution!
- BALROG More GAC know-how, plus loads of letters, tips and adventuring clues...
- HOW A GAME IS MADE Part 2 of our special series on the development of a game, from the drawing board to the retailer's shelf
- BUYERS' GUIDE For all you armchair athletes, the best CPC sports simulations of all time

regulars

- COVERTAPE You wanted more space devoted to the covertape progs? Well you've got it!
- REACTION Contenders for the nickname compo show their faces (but can you stand it?)
- AMSCENE A two-page special this month, including survey results and show report
- SMALL ADS Who needs Exchange & Mart when you've got Amstrad Action?
- SUBSCRIPTIONS/ BACK ISSUES Missing an issue from your collection? Here's how to fill those gaps... and make sure it never happens again!
- SPECIAL OFFERS We scour the CPC world for the best deals... and then pass them on to you
- AAFTERTHOUGHT What are we going to get up to next month? Here are a few little teasers

# ACTION PACK

15 coverage



■ **Forbidden Planet** - tough, 3D vector-graphic shoot-em-up on a planetary scale!

■ **Sprite definer/driver** - a pair of programs from AA reader Sean McManus

■ **Type-Ins AA79** - the complete set of readers' programs from the April issue - and no typing needed!

■ **Pokes galore!** Another huge crop of pokes from our resident hackers... including some help for those stuck on recent AA covertapes

■ **The Addams Family** We've managed to score you this fully-playable demo of Ocean's latest (and last?) film licence. The bad news is, the demo requires 128K to run. The good news is that it looks triff!

## HOW TO LOAD YOUR COVERTAPE

Loading the programs couldn't be easier! Type RUN" (followed by RETURN) and press a key to start the tape. (A shortcut way to get RUN" is to hold down CONTROL and tap the small ENTER key.)

A menu screen will appear in a short time. Select the program you wish to load. Press SPACE to highlight the program you want followed by RETURN to load the program.

Note that BASIC programs (e.g. the pokes) must be loaded directly from BASIC with the RUN" command.

\* If you have a disk drive connected to your

machine you'll first have to type ITAPE to switch the machine to tape loading rather than disk loading. (The I is obtained by pressing SHIFT and @) The computer will load the next program.

**program details over the page**

## Disk owners read this!

If you have a disk drive, you'll only ever have to load from the tape once - all programs are transferred easily to disk.

Insert a blank formatted disk into the drive and the covertape at the start of side one into your cassette player. Connect the REM socket if you have one (6128 owners) - it'll automatically stop the tape in the right places when accessing the disk drive.

Load the menu program in the normal way and select the TRANSFER TO DISK option. Follow the on-screen instructions and press a key when the computer asks you to. It's as simple as that!

If you have problems you'll be asked to rewind the tape and try again. If so, don't panic - follow the advice for tape loading troubles. Still no luck? Then Ablex will replace your tape. See overleaf.

## disk offer

Owners of the 6128 Plus are unable to connect a cassette recorder to their machines. If these or any other users would like a copy on disk, simply snip off the coupon on the corner of this page and send it with a cheque/PO for £2.00 made payable to Ablex Audio Video Ltd to:

AA81 disk offer, Ablex Audio Video Ltd., Harcourt,  
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disk offer

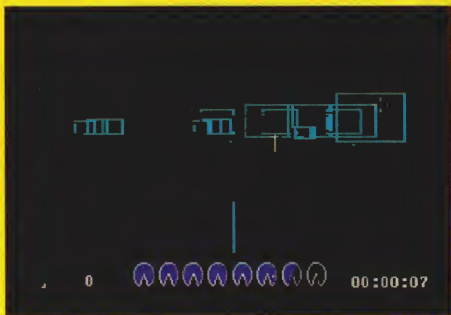


# 1 Forbidden Planet

**Loading:** *Forbidden Planet* can be run direct from the main menu.

Evil Lords, eh? They just never learn. After having his butt whupped in *Dark Star*, the Evil Lord has returned to threaten the universe in *Forbidden Planet*. As The Man Who Stands Alone, Even In a Pub (You Know, the One Who Looks a Bit Morose And Whom Nobody Asks To Join Them In A Drink), you have to stop EL any way you can. The best way we've found is to beard the villain in his lair, and then blow it up.

*Forbidden Planet* is a sort of cross between the *Star Wars* arcade machine and an excited beagle.



■ *Forbidden Planet* might look a bit dull at first glance, but you'll get hooked.

It's a full 3D vector-graphic shoot-em-up - you buzz through the Evil Lord's empire, blasting his minions and raiding his code stores in search of the dude's main base. You start your mission on Planet X, and by referring to the map have to find the four code stores and blast 'em to bits, so gathering the escape code sequence that allows you to move onto the next planet in the galaxy.

Everything in this game is user-definable, enabling you to customise *Forbidden Planet* just the way you want it. It's a bit of a cult thang (as they say), and the kind of game that grows on you. Look at Rod and Adam - they started off much preferring *Southern Belle*, but now *Forbidden Planet* leaves them speechless. Oh by the way, we lied about the excited beagle.

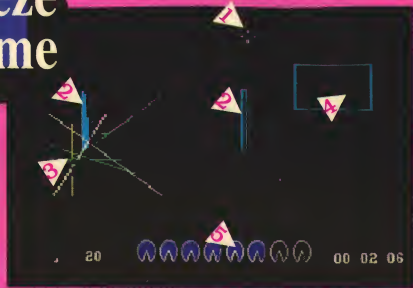
• **Forbidden Planet controls**  
Keyboard or joystick can be used

- N.....Up
- M.....Down
- Z.....Left
- X.....Right
- Q.....Accelerate
- A.....Decelerate

complete  
game

freeze  
frame

## LINES OF FIRE



Using your laser sights (1), you have to zap the enemy towers (2), while dodging the fizzling plasma bolts (3). The planetary force shields are a bit knackered, leaving useful gaps that you can nip through (4). Keep an eye on your energy level (5), cos it has a nasty habit of leaking away if you don't. (Tsch. Modern technology, eh?)

- SPACE.....Fire
- 1.....Display map
- 2.....Quit game
- 3.....Display codes found
- 4.....Return to game

# 3 The Addams Family

playable  
demo

**Loading:** *The Addams Family* is on side two of the tape, and can be run direct from the main menu. 128K required.

Platform japery abounds as we dish up a massive chunk of the latest big name licence from Ocean. Based on the smash hit movie, set in the Addams' famous house, this is a flashback to the platform-em-ups of old (*Manic Miner*, *Technician Ted*, and all that mob).

It's very tricky too. Lots of the puzzles you'll encounter will require precision timing and a very



■ Out of the graveyard (frying pan) and then into the house (fire).

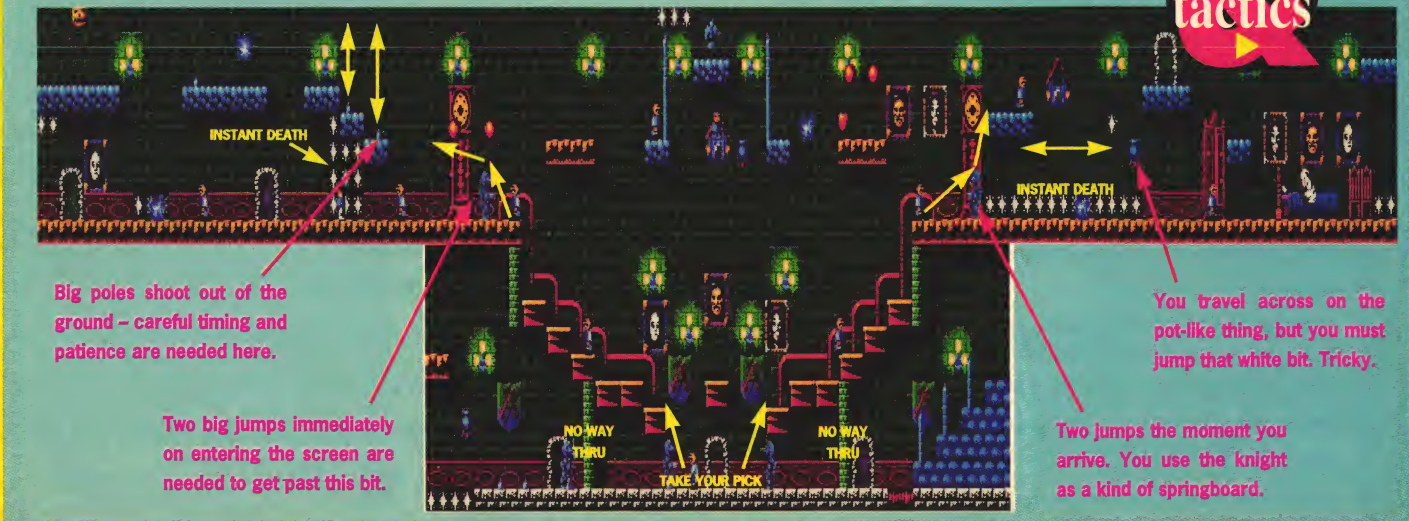
steady hand. We give you a few clues in the box below, but this is just for the first few screens. The rest you'll have to suss out yourselves. Yikes.

• **The Addams Family**  
Keyboard or joystick can be used

- Q.....Up
- A.....Down
- O.....Left
- P.....Right
- SPACE.....Fire
- R.....Pause

## Starting out with the Family

tips  
tactics



Big poles shoot out of the ground - careful timing and patience are needed here.

Two big jumps immediately on entering the screen are needed to get past this bit.

You travel across on the pot-like thing, but you must jump that white bit. Tricky.

Two jumps the moment you arrive. You use the knight as a kind of springboard.

# 2 Sprite Designer

complete  
program

**Loading:** *Sprite Designer* must be run from BASIC. Type RUN"ESD

After loading ESD enter 1 to load the sprite definer program. When loaded the program is set to sprite 0. Select S to choose another sprite number. The default is a mode 0 sprite. To design a sprite in a different mode, press M to change the mode.

Next you have to define the characteristics of the sprite. Select I to give the sprite an identifying name and W and H to set its width and height size in pixels.

Now you're ready to edit the sprite. Press G and a large-scale representation of the sprite appears. Use the cursor keys to move around and number keys plus keys A to F to fill in the pixel with a colour. When you're done press M to get back to the menu.

Once you've finished you can start another sprite by pressing N. This will update the sprite number by one, and allow you to enter a name and the width and height of the new sprite. Press O to get a list of the sprites - you'll need this information when using the sprites later.

When you've finished a sprite, press K to save it. Option 2 will save all the sprites designed in that session. You'll be prompted for an eight-character filename. Tap it in and job done!

The ASCII help file (SDEFUSER.ASC) at the end of side one of the tape gives more details. Load it into a word processor to read through it.

Advanced users: there are also three new RSXs installed. IGRAB saves a sprite to a chosen



■ Wow, cop that for a sprite! (Er, it'll look a bit better when it's shrunk.)

memory address, ISDEF lets you assign a number to a sprite at a given address, then ISPRITE is used to print the sprite at given co-ordinates on screen. If you don't understand what this last paragraph is on about, just forget it ever happened and stick with the definer program.

• **Sprite Designer controls**

Keyboard control only, sensibly enough

- G.....Enter edit mode
- N.....Begin new sprite
- K.....Save
- L.....Load
- Q.....Directory of disk
- X.....Wipe
- T.....Trim
- S.....Enter sprite number
- I.....Enter sprite identity
- P.....Preview
- M.....Mode change
- O.....Output a list
- 0-9 & A-F.....Ink colours

# 4 Type-Ins

readers'  
programs

**Loading:** The type-ins must be run from BASIC. Type RUN" and the name of the file you want (filenames printed in bold).

who's gonna blame you if you didn't type it in? Not Johnny Dean - he still gets his *Type-ins* twenty quid whatever you decide to do.

Couldn't get that excellent type-in from issue 79 to work? Stop crying. Look, here's all of the typos from AA79, lovingly compiled on to a master disk and then duplicated on to around 40,000 C20 cassettes. One of which should have been welded to front of this ish. Here's the details:

**DISC.BAS** Here's a file name that's bound to cause chaos-a-plenty. (You can always rename it.) The program is a simple disk handling utility that lets you erase files, rename 'em, catalogue disks, and so on. Nice one David Hunt.

**BIN-DIG.BAS** Gnarly, a binary-to-digital converter. Just right for all those people who... er... want to convert from binary numbers to digital ones (or versa vice). Kevin Kitchen done the biz here.

**PAIR.BAS (6128 only)** A neat pair matching game. A memory-tester for youngsters and oldsters alike, courtesy of the David Wagstaff of Mouldy in Northants (er, that's Moulden - ed).

**TRACKER.BAS (6128 only)** Another game, this time an excellent light cycle job. There were about 80 DATA lines at the end of this one, so

# 5 Pokes

games  
pokes

**Loading:** The pokes must be run from BASIC. Type RUN" and the name of the file you want (filenames printed in bold below). You need to have the original game disk/tape at hand. Follow on-screen instructions or see *Cheat Mode* (page 38).

Here's this month's big bundle of cheatsomeness, for all you wicked pokesters out there:

**77COVER.GS** We liked last month's *Seymour Take One* and *Firelord* pokes so much that we're using them again. For some reason.

**79COVER.GS** Another covertape gets poked to high heaven. This time we offer slower energy loss on *Ranarama* and infinite lives on *Maze Mania* (AA79 tape).



■ Seymour mini-game *Take One* - just one of the games we help you to cheat on.

**CHEVY.GS** We never managed to get an Amstrad review copy of *Chevy Chase* out of Hi-Tec. If we had have done, we'd now be able to slow the speed down by half with this handy pokelet.

**ROADRUN.GS** Slightly nobby bore-em-up *Road Runner* & *Wile E Coyote* gets infinite lives and a choice of skill levels. Hurrah!

**SWITCH.AP** That rare commodity in these parts, a disk poke. This 'un gives *Switchblade's* Hiro infinite lives and a choice of skill levels. Nice one.

There's another big bundle of pokeness next month, you darned cheating kids you.

## TAPE WON'T WORK?

We go to great lengths to make sure that our cassettes work properly. They are checked directly after the master copies are made and then again once Ablex, our duplicators, have run off a series of test tapes. Only when we give the final go-ahead are the tapes on the front of the magazine actually produced.

However, a few of you may still have difficulty. If so, the problem may be with your equipment. Try the following:

- Try loading at several different volume levels if you're using an external tape recorder. Computers can be fussy about the volume they will load at.
- Clean the tape heads. This can be done with any commercially available cleaning kit. Or else use a cotton bud soaked in alcohol. Gently rub the surface of the heads and pinch roller to remove that layer of accumulated grime.
- Adjust the cassette recorder's head alignment. The alignment screw is located just to the left of

the tape head, and is usually accessible through a small hole. Rotate it a fraction at a time with a jeweller's screwdriver. When the crispest sound is heard, the alignment is spot on.

• Sometimes the tape spools can jam or stick at a critical moment. Check the spools in your cassette rotate freely, if necessary giving the casing a slight tap against a table edge just to make sure. If, after trying the all of the above, you still can't get the tape to load then you can return it for a replacement. Send the tape, along with a brief description of the problem with an SAE to:

**AA81 Covertape Returns,**  
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**Harcourt,**  
**Halesford 14,**  
**Telford,**  
**Shropshire TF7 4QD**



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### ★ ★ LET'S GET SERIOUS ★ ★

A monthly look at serious software  
This Month: **COLOURDUMP 3**  
**NEW RELEASE!!**

After a lot of feedback on ColourDump 2, we are now pleased to announce the latest version of the best colour screen printing program for the CPC range. Requires Star LC-200 or compatible 9 pin colour printer.

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# reaction



Politics, funny old game eh? We at AA were most upset to see popular local comedian CHRIS PATTEN losing his Bath seat (or should that be bath chair, ho ho) at the recent election, so we offered him a chance to escape the dole queue by editing the AA letters pages. He declined the offer, Adam P promptly threw a sulk over us making the offer and... er... we haven't got anyone to answer the letters this month. Sorry.

## A LOAD OF BULL

I have some highly valuable information for your readers. Bull Electrical, 250 Portland Road, Hove, Sussex BN3 5QT (% 0273 203500) are selling GX4000s (customer returns) for £12 and CTM644 monitors for £75. Ring for details.

Colin Byrne

Co Meath, Ireland

## TALKING RUBBISH

To suggest that the word "rubbish", as used to describe something that isn't any good, is no longer in common use, is a very poor excuse for using vulgar expressions. A few minutes search through Roget's Thesaurus would give you dozens of credible alternatives!

This reader, who until recent months, has enjoyed AA for many years, feels that you should set a better example, for the sake of your younger readers who no doubt copy you.

Dr Alexandar Bourne

Bristol

## CUT THE CRAP

It would seem to me, someone who twenty years ago (at fourteen) had his ear clipped for saying "damn", that the use of the word 'g\*t' is acceptable as long as insulting the recipient is acceptable. The use of the word 'crap' would indicate that the editorial staff do not wish to be known as polite or educated, therefore I would question the wisdom of having these people in these positions, drawing pay!

I suppose I shall be told to 'get real', whatever that means, and that I am out of touch and over the hill. But I still believe that those in a position to guide our thoughts, especially the thoughts of the young, have a moral obligation to use proper English.

Ken Dunn

Tidworth, Hants

## PARTY ON DUDES!

How's it hangin' AA dudes and babes? You are now reading the most truly outstanding letter ever! Me (James Walker) and my most excellent compadre and colleague David Purcell, are the CFE (Campaign For Eight-bits).

Like, we are totally sick and most bogusly tired

of the way in which 8-bit owners are constantly slagged off by 16-bit owners and ignored by software houses! This is truly worse than bogus... it's totally BOG!

We should stop fighting one another and get together, to show the most unprecedented 16-bit scum and most truly ignorant software houses how many of us there really is. Stand up and be counted!

James Walker

Liverpool

## AN EXPLANATION

I think you didn't quite understand what I meant by my question "Do you like lard?", so I'll explain roughly what I meant...

When I said lard I didn't mean the white, butter looking, human type stuff you get from Sainsbury's. Dear me, no. I meant REAL lard. Real lard can only be found in a top secret place, in a far away land. Real lard is not lumpy or white, nor is it called lard there. The only other person in the world who knows about this is my friend Daniel. I am not going to tell you any more or lard will not like it. So I don't want to hear another bad word about lard, or sprats, from you ever again.

John Harrington

Horley, Surrey



■ This lard is not the sort of lard John Harrington is talking about when he talks about lard. He means another sort of lard.

## PLAYABLE

Demo', but all it consisted of was an awful screeching sound. Er, I might have bad taste or something because all my friends reckoned that it was brilliant, but I found the whole thing an insult to music in general.

Andrew Doyle

Solihull, West Mids



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some of your letters (two months in a row!). They wouldn't let me pick any of the nice letters, but I managed to sneak one in. OK then, here we go:

"Maryanne, believe it or not, the creatures in Rodland aren't real, they are just a bunch of pixels that can't feel anything, so you can't kill them because they're inanimate. But I do agree that killing small animals is not fun. Torturing them is much more entertaining."

Ian Evans, Dorset

Ian, thank you for taking the time to share your opinion with me. I would like to say, though, that I am familiar with the concept of computer graphics, and of course I realise that no matter how cute and cuddly the creatures look on screen in Rodland, I know that when you kill them they don't really die. But yes I do worry, because it's the principle that concerns me.

It is just such a shame that young people like yourself take great pleasure in blasting to bits those pixels lovingly created by graphics artists: they do depict living, moving characters you know. The effect this mindless violence (however trivial you may think it) has on your view of defenceless animals is in reality plainly obvious from your closing statement. Killing small animals is not clever, it's not fun and it won't make you caring '90s man.

"Adam and Rod, stop being so nasty to Maryanne. You have probably had lots of letters saying the same thing but I don't care: what's wrong with not wanting to beat up little fluffy animals?"

If you were walking down a street and saw



This photo is now stuck on the wall by Maryanne's desk. Everytime people start having a go at her, she stares at it for a few minutes and starts smiling. We're so scared.

# maryanne's mail

Well hello, it's Maryanne here again. Adam and Rod have kindly allowed me the chance to answer

a cute bunny hopping around in a cage, would you go over and swing it over your head and smash it against the ground? I don't think so. You would get done over by the big strong bloke who owned it, and people would say 'there goes Adam/Rod, the cruel one who beat up a bunny' and you would lose all street cred and be forced to live as editor/writer hoping that someone will be your friend (nothing personal).

I've had a bunny for seven years and she's still as cute and fluffy as when she was a baby. I have sent a photo of her. Give it to Maryanne so she can look at it when she is feeling sad because you have been mean to her, it will cheer her up (probably)."

Duncan Styles, Maidstone

Duncan, I would first like to say how much I appreciated your letter, which gave me renewed hope. I nearly didn't get to see either the letter or the photo, though. Adam threw the letter in the bin, and I had to rescue the picture from him - he was going to use it for target practice (Rod and Adam are currently engaged in a rubber band war). I had to bribe him, and he only agreed to hand over the bunnies if I paid for his lunch. But don't worry Duncan, it's okay: the picture is now stuck firmly on the wall by my desk.

I think your comments hit home, that's why your letter got thrown away - they couldn't face the truth. Maybe if more of our readers wrote in and expressed similar views (we can't be the only two concerned people, Duncan), perhaps Rod and Adam might see the error of their ways. So send those letters in, even Adam and Rod deserve a chance to change. Have hope Duncan. I love the picture, it's cheered me up no end!

"Dear AA people (except Maryanne), I think you should shoot Maryanne with the biggest machine gun you can find. Watch her blood and guts spew out everywhere. Then shove

her in a reinforced plackie bag.

After you have done this dastardly deed, attach a note to this bag saying 'I have shot myself because I accidentally trod on a lady-bird, therefore causing it undue pain'. Then wipe your fingerprints away. Call the police and run. They will immediately suspect the teddy bear and take it to prison. Then you're free!"

Naomi, Macclesfield

I was both shocked and saddened by your letter, Naomi. Rod and Adam wouldn't get rid of me because they need me. However, Naomi, could I just point out a few major problems with your plan. For one, no-one would believe I had been so careless as to tread on anything (that includes that nasty mess that you left under my desk just the other day, Adam - I know it was you). Besides which Naomi, my teddy bear and I have a very good relationship: he was deeply distressed by your dastardly plan to frame him in such a despicable, unjust murder. It has taken me ages to persuade him that the police rarely imprison teddy bears, especially after Adam told him they would knock the stuffing out of him.



Maryanne comforts Hugo after Naomi's cruel accusations. (Sounds a bit like a Neighbours plot that, doesn't it?)

He is still suffering the after-effects of your letter and will not come out from under the cupboard. You haven't upset me Naomi, I know that you didn't really mean it, but just remember not everyone is so understanding. You really should think about the repercussions of such comments on other people (including teddy bears) before making them. I hope you can live with your conscience knowing what you have done to my teddy bear.

I am going now, I feel the need to look at Duncan's bunnies. But before I go, if any of you readers out there have any comments to make or if you feel you just can't speak to Rod or Adam, just scribble your thoughts to me and maybe they'll let me have some space in next month's Reaction. I'll reply as soon as possible I promise. See you soon (I hope).

Lots of Love,

Maryanne xxx







# amscene

# Germany calling!

WAVE points out that the interfaces are also

• Got a 6128 Plus? Want to load tape software? WAVE has now modified over 1,500 6128 Plus machines so that they can do just this! The cost of the conversion is £30 plus £5.88 postage and packing.

Rickitt has got to be just about the largest sup-

**NEWS... NEWS... NE**



...We've mislaid your addresses and we want to send you some money! We want to hear from: Kevin Kitchen, David Wagstaff, David Hunt and Johnny Dean. Either write or 'phone with your details please.



A person in a Dalek costume, a character from the British science fiction television series Doctor Who, is standing at a convention. The costume is black with a silver dome and a skirt with many small, glowing lights. The person is holding a sign that says "Dalek".

**The Show attracted all manner of visitors. This fellow insisted on exterminating everyone until the security men ushered him outside.**



**The Codemasters stand... but where was that man Richard Eddy? Inside his little cubby-hole scoffing an entire bowlful of Cadbury's Mini-Eggs, it turns out.**

# Show Report

**"There was plenty going** on at the ECTS this year, but most of it on the other formats. Most of the full-price publishers have pulled out of the CPC market, but the good news is that the budget software houses are continuing to support it strongly. Codemasters has loads of new, original product in the pipeline, for a start. So has Alternative Software. Hi-Tec (sort of half way between budget and full-price) had a big stand and was showing off all its cartoon licences. Psygnosis is obviously serious about doing a CPC version of the blockbusting *Lemmings*, while we've just learned that ace CPC supporter Gremlin is to go ahead with its Nigel Mansell licence later this year. Hurrah!"



**The Design Centre in Islington was pretty packed, despite the ECTS being a trade-only show.**

**NEWS... NEWS... NEWS... NEWS... NEWS... NEWS... NEWS... NEWS... NEWS... NEWS...**

# survey results

## What the readers said

**"Adam Peters is great!"**  
Richard Back, Leigh-on-Sea  
*There's some funny folk in Leigh-on-Sea.*

We promised free binders to 24 readers selected at random from all those who sent in questionnaire forms. And here are those lucky winners: Ray Rowland, Simon Alderson, Nikky Coppelstone, William Skilling, Mr. L. Marsh, Anthony Kay, Mr. A. K. Porter, Peter Maydell, Andrew Hughes, Colin Graham, Graham Horton, George Samuel, Mr. K. Guy, Mr. R. A. Tait, David Emerson, Mr. J. W. Murray, Matthew Howley, A. Baldwin, E. S. Teixeira, Mr. Andrew Gledhill, Dean Christian, Shane Davison, Robert Clarke, Simon Fu.

Well done, folks, your Amstrad Action binders are on the way!

Aw, shucks! We try to produce the best all-round CPC mag possible, and it's nice to know most of you agree. All your criticisms and comments have been noted, though, and we will keep trying to make Amstrad Action ever more entertaining, informative and essential for anyone with a CPC. Plus or GX4000 console!



# Meet the Team

To celebrate our special fanzines ish, we asked each member of the AA team to knock up their own mag (in a school project sort of a way)...



**ROD LAWTON**  
My fanzine's called **Mnmlsm**. It's a magazine all about minimalism. All it consists of is a single sheet of paper with the word 'minimalism' on it. Very small. With all the vowels left out.



**ADAM PETERS**  
I've called my magazine **Play the Game**. What's in it? Er, nothing. All the pages are blank. You said, "just do a cover so we can photograph it". Oops, wasn't I supposed to say that?



**ADAM WARING**  
**Techie Widgets** is the magazine for wireheads everywhere, with features on sprockets, soldering technique and sonic chip-blowing. Or something along those lines.



**MARYANNE B**  
My magazine is titled **Fluffy Animals Monthly**. It includes pictures of puppies, kittens and little baby bunnies with ribbons in their hair. Oh, and some poems about squirrels too.



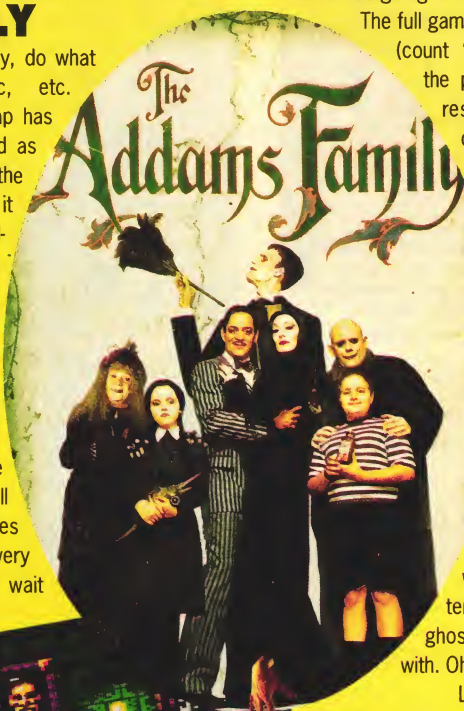
**NICOLA LUCAS**  
**Forward Planning** is an important skill for a production co-ordinator, so I've done a magazine to explain about it. The title was too big though, and some of it fell off the page.

# on the GRAPEVINE

Creepy ghosties, Dominik Diamond "giving it a good waggle" again, and a cartoon duck... looks like **ADAM PETERS** is up to his neck in games news and gossip once more...

## THE ADDAMS FAMILY

Say what they wanna say, do what they wanna do, etc, etc. Hammer's crap kiddie rap has been officially recognised as the worst song of the 1990s so far. The film it ruined the opening credits of has been officially recognised as quite good, though not as good as the gnarly black and white TV series it ripped off. As for the CPC game, the official verdict is a mere four weeks away, and will be found within the pages of the next issue of this very magazine. If you can't wait that long, load up your



covertape demo and make your own judgment. We reckon it's going to be pretty fab.

The full game features approximately 240 (count 'em, 240!) screens. Playing the part of Gomez, you have to rescue the other five members of your family, who have got lost. In their own house!

There are six coloured keys to be found, each of which allows access to a new part of the house, in which you'll find one of your beleaguered relatives. There are buckets of platform puzzles to be solved, and lots of skilled jumping will be needed to avoid a quick trip to death city. Which is why you've got a whopping ten lives. Er, except you're a ghost so you're dead to begin with. Oh, never mind.

Like a lot of games nowadays (Final Fight and Terminator 2 spring to mind), *The Addams Family* requires 128K to run. This is perhaps an inevitable state of affairs: as programmers work hard to get the most out of the machine, they increasingly find themselves exceeding the memory limit of the 64K models. Tsch. It's narking, but what can you do?

*The Addams Family* (Ocean) will be out very soon, priced £10.99 cassette, £15.99 disk. We'll be reviewing it next month. The game requires 128K to run.

## The Word Is Out

The Channel 4 computer games show **Gamesmaster** was a massive hit, readers. There are three pieces of evidence that we can provide to back this claim up.

Firstly, it attracted audiences of over three million. Which is quite a lot. If all the prog's viewers were laid out end to end along the M1, it would prove a very silly, dangerous and pointless exercise. But three million is still quite a lot.

Secondly, a new series of the show is going to be recorded and broadcast from October. They are look-

ing for audiences, competitors, reviewers and the like. If you're interested send details of your fave games, your hi-scores (if available), name, address, age and a photo (if you've got one) to: Gamesmaster Stardom, PO Box 91, London E14 9GT. Go on dude, you never know your luck.

Thirdly, there's a second computer games show on the way. Yowser! Yorkshire TV are the dudes responsible, Edd the Duck's old mate Andy Crane is going to be the presenter, and 4.45pm on



## DJ PUFF'S VOLCANIC ADVENTURE

Oh no, it's a dragon on a motorbike. No ordinary dragon mind, this is Little Puff of, er, Little Puff fame. Only he's not little any more, he's all grown up and dressed in Stussy. DJ Puff features the most ace plot ever in computer games history. Stupid, but ace.

DJ Puff is a rave master general, spinning ace cuts for all his chillin' dragon mates at all-night raves on his home island. But a nasty dude called Captain Krip has banned raving and stolen all DJ Puff's records. Boo! Hiss! Down with the rave police!

Obviously, you've got to platform it round the place collecting the records. Oh, and there's some stuff about special weapons and so forth, but we skipped that bit. Maximum respect to Puff - he knows the score. And no, we don't mean that thing at the top of the screen with 'score' written in front of it. Tsch.

Raving, as everyone knows, is the only serious competitor to computer games as the entertainment form for the 21st century. We'll be bringing you the full DJ Puff review in an extended Juan Atkins mix next month, but if you'd like to practice your house stomp in preparation (you never know, it might prove useful), can I recommend Ministry of Sound in Elephant & Castle and Alpha Centuri in Bow. Safe.

*DJ Puff's Volcanic Caper* (Codemasters) will be rushing a computer store near you very shortly, priced at £3.99 cassette. Action Test will give it a spin next month.



Thursday 29th

October is when the whole shabang kicks off. Yorkshire haven't thought of a name for the prog yet, so if you can come up with one, write to: I've got a good idea for a name for that computer games show you're doing, c/o Richard Maude, Yorkshire Television, Leeds. They'd be ever so grateful.

But enough about games on the telly, what about games on the shelves? Double mega top news coming up: Gremlin Graphics are back in the CPC scene mere weeks after threatening to leave it. The latest news from top gremlin Richardson is that the CPC version of **Nigel**

## ALTERNATIVE GAMES

There are a few software houses that AA has never really featured in much detail. One of these is Alternative. Time we gave them a ring and got some games in, we decided.

The first fruits of our new relationship can be found on page 34 where we get stuck into **Bangers & Mash**. But wait... there's more! A quick glance at the old release schedules tells us that there are a further three Alternative titles racing

Bathwards even as we speak (er, write). **Count Duckula 2** is the second game starring the cartoon duck who scores several million cool points for being a vegetarian.

**Postman Pat 3** is the (can you guess?) third game starring big nose and his pesky flip-flop cat.

**Alvin & the Chipmunks**, meanwhile, is the very first game featuring the mega-dweeby so-called rodent rock group. Give me Boney M anyway.

Alternative are trying to avoid doing Speccy ports where possible. *Duckula* is a Speccy port, but *Postman Pat* isn't. *Alvin & the Chipmunks* is described as being "a compromise port". Presumably half of it will be a Speccy port and the other half won't. Or something like that.

*Count Duckula 2*, *Postman Pat 3* and *Alvin & the Chipmunks* (all Alternative) are coming round the mountain even as we speak, priced £3.99 cassette each. Next month we review at least one of them. Maybe all of them, who knows (or dares to dream)?

**Mansell** will be going ahead, and it'll appear sometime in the autumn. Anyone who took part in the vote-in we featured last month will receive an info pack closer to the time. Hurrah!

Our chums at US Gold have been pretty quiet lately. There's three big games we're expecting from them; **Bonanza Bros**, **Indy 4 - The Fate Of Atlantis** and **Mega Twins**. We first heard of these almost a year ago, but haven't yet seen hide nor hair of the games themselves (at least not the CPC versions). Oh well, not to worry, they'll turn up sooner or later, in amongst one of the big bundles of goodness our friendly postie brings to our door of a morning.

For now, let's settle down with our L7 album, a bottle of Aqua Libra, and a big box of Curly Wurries. For tomorrow may rain, but I'll follow the sun, oh yes indeed. Summer's coming, so buy some shades. Ciao.

## The Charts

This chart is compiled by Gallup Ltd. (© European Leisure Software Publishers' Association Ltd. 1992)

### FULL-PRICE

- 1 **Dizzy's Excellent Adventures** C/masters
- 2 **WWF Wrestlemania** Ocean
- 3 **Manchester United Europe** Krisalis
- 4 **Space Crusade** Gremlin Graphics
- 5 **Cartoon Collection** Codemasters
- 6 **Dizzy Collection** Codemasters
- 7 **Rainbow Collection** Ocean
- 8 **Terminator 2** Ocean
- 9 **Soccer Stars** Empire
- 10 **Titus the Fox** Titus/Palace

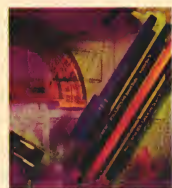
### BUDGET

- 1 **Midnight Resistance** Hit Squad
- 2 **Bubble Bobble** Hit Squad
- 3 **Italia '90** Tronix
- 4 **Shadow Warriors** Hit Squad
- 5 **Manchester United** GBH
- 6 **Golden Axe** Tronix
- 7 **Robocop** Hit Squad
- 8 **Double Dragon** Tronix
- 9 **Bubble Dizzy** Codemasters
- 10 **Rainbow Islands** Hit Squad



# Get into print

## The complete guide to home publishing



What are fanzines? Where did they come from? And why? On this page MARK FRITH sets everything into its cultural context, and on the other two ADAM PETERS tips you off as to how it's all done.

Stop reading, start writing!

Fanzines are the radical alternative within the publishing establishment. Like Tony Benn to the Labour Party or Marina Ogilvy to the Royal family: they are earthy, outspoken and a little embarrassing at times.

They cover many colours of the spectrum and range from grubby photocopied sheets of A4 to deluxe colour publications selling thousands. (The Face and Viz were basically fanzines when they began. Viz still is, really.)

Fanzines have been around for decades, they just weren't called that. In the sixties and seventies they were 'underground journals', magazines like Oz that reflected the growing permissive society. They were often loud, reactionary and offensive. Young people so fed up of the outside society – and the media's part in it – that they decided to get back at this enemy, unreachable through street action or the ballot box, through the art of communication. If words were your thing and you had strong opinions (and a mate with a camera), then you were sorted. If you've got it, flaunt it.

The name 'fanzine' gained prominence in the late seventies, and is a shortening of the term 'fan's magazine'. These publi-



■ "What are fanzines?" asks Mr Bowl. These are fanzines, Mr Bowl. Small circulation mags. All these are CPC ones.

cations came into their own with the advent of punk. Punk was marked by a glut of people with extreme views but without the means to express them, so fanzines began. Sniffin' Glue was one of the more notorious publications of this kind.

It was during this period that one of the main areas of worry relating to fanzines arose. The very reason that fanzines were so popular – their accessi-

bility – is also their main worry. Anyone could do a fanzine, and they did. Racist skinhead groups utilised this punk art form, spreading their word on the streets without ethics, authorities or retail chains to censor them. Most of the time though, this lack of censorship was a benefit: radical views that would normally be suppressed were allowed free reign.

In the eighties and nineties fanzines boomed. Soon every football league club had one (many now have four or five), the official club programmes having become increasingly boring and un-objective. Music 'zines are sold outside most indie gigs today, and the computer boom of recent years has seen a growth in computer fanzines, both games-based and serious types.

Overall, fanzines are positive publications that bring many different views together in an entertaining and down-to-earth way. As well as making money for the 'publisher', which is a not-to-be ignored reason for the 'zines, they are also a valuable first step for the prospective journalist, and a great place for people to push back the frontiers of their writing style.

And, of course, they're cheap.

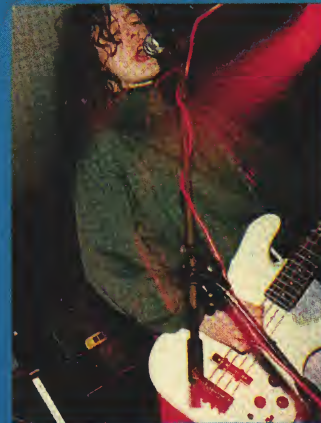
horrid names in your 'zine: PJ Harvey, Velvet Crush, The Boo Radleys and Dodgy should be a good start.

Ignore requests by Adam Peters to put his band Hippy State in the fanzine, although it could secure you a couple of hundred extra sales. From him. (Ho ho ho (not!) – Adam.)

Find a printer who is either a relative or who doesn't enquire too much about immediacy of payment, your address, your phone number, etc.

Sell the magazine outside gigs by top indie bands (it helps sales if you have the band in question on the cover). Make sure that you don't engage in heavy stage-diving during the gig as you'll probably lose all the mags in the process.

Finally, keep a couple of copies of each issue, although you'll probably have hundreds. That band on the flexi-disc you're giving away just might be the next James. Or maybe not.



■ Long hair and guitars, that's what rock and roll is all about. Apparently.

Mark Frith is a Smash Hits journalist who in his time has also contributed to a number of music fanzines, including Stripy Trousers, The Beautiful North and Wooo. Hello Preston! Mark is 21, and lives in East London. In a house.



■ Once you've got your text and pics, it's time to work out where to put it all.



■ Buy some Spray Mount (£8): it's great fun, plus you can paste stuff up with it.

We get quite a few letters here at AA Towers from people wanting to know how you go about starting your own magazine. "Do you need a licence?" and "how old do you have to be?" are two of the more bizarre questions we often get asked.

The truth of the matter is that starting your own magazine is very easy, very cheap, and anyone can do it. At its most basic, all you need is a pen and some paper, plus access to a photocopier (at your school, your workplace, your local library, Prontaprint, etc).

Producing a glossy colour mag like AA is major league expense territory (if you've got less than £20,000 at your disposal, forget it), but what matters more than the shininess of the paper or the number of colours on the page is the fact that you get the opportunity to write about things that concern you, impart your opinions to other people, and enjoy all the fun of putting the thing together. And you can do that for a couple of quid, and maybe make a bit of cash in the long run.

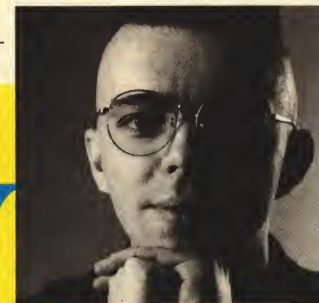
A glossy high street magazine has dif-

ferent staff to fulfil different functions, and separate departments to deal with different aspects of the process. Writers only write, designers only design, and once the issue is finished it's straight on to the next one. The distribution, subscriptions, mail order and such like are all in the hands of other people.

Doing your own fanzine gives you full control over every aspect of the magazine. No grim-faced publisher telling you to change the size of the headings and put a photo of a man in a suit on the cover. And no legal worries. Fanzine editors are just as suable as big publishing houses, but no-one bothers. The magazines get away with things that high street mags would never dare.

Interested? Right, here's a quick guide to how to produce your own magazine in five easy stages. Yes, it really is this simple:

**1) Decide what sort of mag you're going to do.** If you're just picking something for the sake of it, forget it. But if you've always wanted to do your own CPC magazine... Or you're the biggest (only?)



## computer fanzine

You're all set to start your computer games mag. You've got your DTP package (or Pritt Stick and scissors), but what are you going to write about? How do you fill those pages? Let's ask STUART CAMPBELL...

Well, this is the easy bit, really. Ideally, of course, you'll have a load of games to review to start off with, preferably obtained for nowt from the software houses. Contacts in the business, compromising photographs of the Managing Director, a reference from your bank manager or a big baseball bat and a threatening demeanour are all useful tools in achieving this aim, but if you've got none of those, don't panic. A good first issue with reviews

of a few old, borrowed or even imaginary games will usually be enough to persuade the game producers that you're above board. (Of course, you can always just try bluffing and review new releases that you haven't actually played yourself, but this is a tricky one to carry off convincingly).

A mag filled purely with reviews, though, will almost certainly be dead dull. So what else can you write about? Well, thoughtful opinion pieces (read:

random directionless ranting) are always a good read, as well as a neat way to let off steam (assuming you've actually got some interesting opinions about something in the first place). If you can draw a bit, cartoons help to break up the walls of text, and screenshots are worth a thousand words too. (You don't need expensive technology for this – you can always just blag pics from ads or other magazines, a tactic that also works for tips sections. They do it, why shouldn't you?)

Letters pages are a big favourite with readers too, but speaking from experience I find they're much livelier if you write the letters yourself. Then you want lots of big ads for yourself (preferably altered versions of real-life ones), just to drum into the readers' minds what a fab mag they're reading and how essential it is for them to buy the next issue. Oh yeah, and competitions too. The chances are no-one will

## ring their bell

Fanzines cannot live by fresh air alone. They need news, reviews, and other such like. And this is where the old telephone comes in handy. Here are some numbers to cut out and keep...

### MUSIC CONTACTS

Doing a music fanzine? Want to know where to go for band info and to arrange interviews? Simply ring the relevant number and ask for the PR person:

A & M (Bryan Adams, Extreme, Ce Ce Peniston) 071-736 3311  
MCA (Guns 'n' Roses, Spinal Tap, The Commitments) 071-437 9747  
POLYDOR (The Cure, Jason Donovan, Cathy Dennis) 081-846 8090  
PWL (Kylie Minogue, 2 Unlimited, Opus III) 071-403 0007  
WEA (REM, Seal, 808 State) 071-937 8844  
PHILIP HALL (Manic Street Preachers, Stone Roses, Beautiful South) 081-740 6288  
BAD MOON (Nirvana, Carter USM, Mega City 4, Soundgarden) 071-221 9612  
CREATION (Ride, Primal Scream, Teenage Fanclub, Adorable) 081-986 7190  
HEAVENLY (St Etienne, Flowered Up, Golden) 071-240 2474  
MICK HOUGHTON (Wedding Present, KLF, Jesus & Mary Chain) 071-481 2177

### CHEAP PRINTERS

So where so you go to get your magazine printed? Here are some of the most popular, affordable printers, most of whom specialise in fanzines. Give them a ring to discuss your requirements:

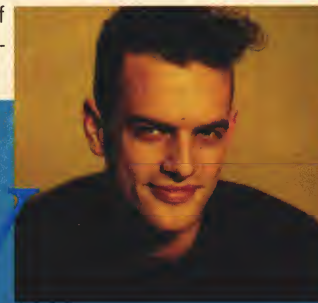
CATFORD COPY CENTRE Anybody 081-695 0101  
JUMA PRINT Martin Lacey 0742 720915  
TECHNOPRINT 2000 Mark Smee 0532 533920

## music fanzine

Is music your thang? Do you like shaking your hair-cut to the latest moshing geetar sounds? Fancy writing about your obsession? Here's MARK FRITH with some hot tips for doing a music fanzine...

The most important pre-requisite for the task of producing a music fanzine is an abnormally large ego-lead need to see your name in print. If you're the sort of person who types their name on a piece of paper and looks at it for hours, fanzines are for you. It's virtually the same thing: you'll have typed, it'll be your words and you'll probably be the only person to see it.

First off, try and find some like-minded souls. Friends who are into the



same type of music as you and also like seeing their name in print. These will be your 'staff'. You can order them about, patronise them and change as much of their text as you like.

Most fanzine writers tend to like music that only eleven other people in the world like. It is these eleven people that you should – and probably will – get to buy your fanzine. Most of them will be related to you, if you're lucky.

Remember, only put groups with



## ring their bell

More useful numbers to cut out and keep (if you're into that sort of thing)...

### SOFTWARE HOUSES

Want the latest news from the world of computer games to chuck in your fanzine? Have a chat to the dudes below. You'll need to be quite well established before you can try blagging review copies, mind.

DOMARK Tammy Lock 081-780 2222  
GREMLIN (plus GBH) Ian Richardson 0742 753423  
OCEAN (plus HIT SQUAD) Ken Locksley  
061-832 6633  
PALACE Pete Stone 071-278 0751  
PSYGNOSIS Nick Wilde 051-709 5755  
US GOLD (plus KIXX) Danielle Woodyatt  
021-625 3388  
VIRGIN (plus TRONIX) Caroline Stokes  
081-960 2255  
ALTERNATIVE Roger Hulley 0703 613316  
CODEMASTERS Richard Eddy 0926 814132  
HI-TEC Dave Reidy 0742 587555  
ZEPPELIN Darren Jobbling 091-385 7753

### FANZINE OUTLETS

Here are some people you might be able to get to sell your mag (along with your local record, book or computer games shops and the odd newsagents):

NOSTALGIA & COMICS Birmingham 021-643 6143  
PICADILLY RECORDS Manchester 061-839 8008  
PROBE RECORDS Liverpool 051-227 5646  
REVOLVER RECORDS Bristol 0272 299105  
ROUGH TRADE London, Notting Hill 071-229 8541  
London, Covent Garden 071-240 0105  
SELECTADISC Nottingham 0602 475913  
SPORTSPAGES London 071-240 9604  
STRATHCLYDE PROGRAMME SHOP Glasgow  
041-332 4995

## football fanzine

Things are afoot on the soccer terraces of Britain. Fanzines have arrived, programmes are gathering dirt in the gutter, anger and humour are on the rise: ADAM PETERS invites you to join the fun...

It's easy. Far too easy. Whilst other fanzines have trouble hunting out the punters, the football ones know where their entire target market will be (in their thousands) from 1.30-3.00 on a Saturday afternoon. They'll be walking from the station to the stadium, and their path will be littered with people in dodgy trousers shouting "fanzine, new issue, only 50p, get it here". The market is there, so how do you invade it?

Chances are the team you support already has a fanzine (probably more than one), so why not accost one of their sellers at a game and ask them how many they sell? Buy up all the back issues they've got. It'll give you some idea as to the sort of thing you can fill the pages with.

This is a good plan for any sort of fanzine. Get hold of some similar publications and, er, rip them off (sort of).



■ Break into your school/workplace late at night and run off loads of copies.

fan of Dribbleworth Town FC or ace rock group Colin & the Syco-Megas... Or maybe you'd like to do a magazine about your school so you can slag off that bloke in the fourth year who is always nicking your choccie bars... Whether it's a bee in your bonnet or a stirring in your loins, go for it!

**2) Write some stuff.** Our expert tipsters provide some clues at the bottom of these pages, but basically write about what you like and what you think will interest the punter on the streets.

**3) Layout the pages.** Hand written pages are naff, pages done on computer DTP packages are fab. If you can't get hold of a printer for your CPC, a typewriter will do. Photocopy some pictures out of magazines, draw some cartoons, then reach for the scissors and Pritt Stick and bung everything down onto the pages.

**4) Roll the presses.** Photocopy the pages and then staple them together. You'll probably want back to back printing (photocopying onto both sides of a sheet) which involves fiddling about with the copier a bit. Find someone with a degree in



■ Finally, come to Bath and try to sell a copy to a man in a dodgy baseball cap.

Photocopier Operation. To be really flash, you'll need to be centre stapled rather than side stapled. This means getting four pages onto each sheet and folding over. If the number of pages in the mag isn't divisible by four, you might encounter problems at this stage!

If you reckon you're going to sell 150 or more copiers, it will be worthwhile getting in touch with a printer. Printing is much cheaper, much better quality and much less hassle than photocopying. Check our phone list for some cheap printers.

**5) Sell the magazine.** Find some people who you think will be interested in the magazine and, er, try to sell it to them. Try to persuade relevant shops to sell the mag (they will want a hefty commission though), eg your local computer games shop for a computer fanzine, etc. Go where the customers will be (pop concerts, footie matches, computer shows), and start polishing up that sales pitch. Send a copy to AA - we'll print the address and details for any mag produced on the CPC.

Go on, go for it. It's the most fun you can have with a sheet of Letraset and a tube of Pritt Stick.

### AND HERE'S ONE I MADE EARLIER...

Blimey, a full colour cover! This issue (no 6) of my fanzine *Witton Wisdom* was produced on an Apple Mac, but the first four were produced on a CPC. It started off as a 16-page black and white A5 size (that's half the size of the page you're currently reading) mag with a print run of 750. By the fourth ish the circulation had risen to 2,500 and the mag was now 48 pages with a shiny three colour cover and extra colours on ten of the inside pages. All with only the aid of a CPC 6128, *Stop Press*, *Protext CP/M* and a dot matrix printer. And a writer in Stafford, cartoonist in Birmingham and printer in Yorkshire. Tip: be adventurous.

By the way, there are a lot of retail outlets around the country that sell football fanzines (see our phone list for some of them), and they'll be more than happy to stock yours.



Adam Peters is a work-shy layabout. Before blackmailing *Amstrad Action* into employing him, Adam used to knock out football fanzines, including *Lennie Lawrence* (Charlton Athletic) and *Witton Wisdom* (Aston Villa)

# public image

There are new CPC fanzines appearing all the time. ADAM PETERS meets some of the old hands and gets introduced to some of the new bugs...

## A-OK

Editor: Matthew Harrodine  
Address: 155 Haslucks Green Road, Shirley, Solihull, West Mids B90 2LG  
Price: £1.00 (inc p&p)  
Content: Serious  
Frequency: Bi-monthly

A-OK features the odd game review, some editorial ranting and a couple of letters. The vast majority of it is given over to techie stuff though, including tutorials on programming languages and the like. The design leaves a bit to be desired, though it has improved recently. There's very little in the way of illustration, the text is very hard to read, and the photocopying can be a bit crap. Not the best of techie fanzines, but a worthwhile read.

## AMSTRAD FUN

Editors: Keith Woods, John O'Beirne  
Address: 8 Springfield Drive, Templeogue, Dublin 6W, Ireland  
Price: £1.25 (inc p&p)  
Content: Mainly games  
Frequency: Quarterly

A new fanzine from Ireland: "the only Irish fanzine for Amstrad users", it calls itself. All we have seen of it is the prototype first issue, so what the full thing is like (if, indeed, it has got off the ground) we can't say. Messy design, which actually looks quite fab in a loads of pictures, scissors and glue type of way. They've got lots of screen shots cut out of AA (but tut!) and bags of enthusiasm, so give these Dublin lads your support. And your cash as well, of course.

## ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Editor: Tim Blackburn  
Address: 19 Lee Street, Liversedge, West Yorkshire WF15 6DZ  
Price: 70p + SAE  
Content: Mainly PD reviews  
Frequency: Bi-monthly

One of our fave 'zines. AI is mostly full of reviews of PD disks. There's a 'comms' column too, and buckets of humour. The latest ish is professionally printed rather than photocopied, and includes half-page reviews of no fewer than (and no more than) eleven new PD disks. The mag also includes the most comprehensive list of PD libraries available anywhere. And it's fairly cheap too. Nice one.

## CPC DOMAIN

Editor: Alan Scully  
Address: 119 Laurel Drive, East Kilbride, Glasgow G75 9JG  
Price: £1.25 + blank disk + SAE  
Content: Mainly PD  
Frequency: Every six weeks

Disk fanzines are all the rage in France, but this is the only British one so far. The menu system is really smart and the whole thing is well put together, with PD reviews, news and details of the latest programs to hit the Scull PD library. Alan recently passed management of his software library over to 3D's Graeme Chesser, leaving him free to concentrate on *CPC Domain*. Oh yes, and his university degree.

## INPUT

Editors: Simon Bathard, Sean Stone  
Address: 1 Linsvale Drive, Frome, Somerset BA11 2BP  
Price: £2.00 (inc p&p)  
Content: Games and PD (CPC/ST/Amiga)  
Frequency: Sporadic

Hmm, a multi-format mag produced by two youngsters who live across the road from each other. One owns a CPC, the other an ST. The 'zine is well put together, if pretty messy, and includes a couple of CPC reviews, a page of CPC cheats and a bit of CPC PD info. It's pretty expensive though, especially considering it only includes seven or eight pages relevant to Amstrad owners. Oh well, there's worse things you could spend your money on (Bruce Springsteen albums, for instance).

## PLAYMATES

Editor: Carl Surry  
Address: 37 Fairfield Way, Barnet, Herts EN5 2BQ  
Price: £1.30 (inc p&p)  
Content: Games and Bonzo news  
Frequency: Quarterly

If you're into CPC games, this is the fanzine for you. The latest issue contains a whopping fourteen A4 pages of games reviews! There's also news for users of the Bonzo tape-to-disk program. It suffers a little from ego publishing (count how many times the word 'I' appears), but don't let that put you off. The monthly round-ups are stonkin' - the one in issue 11 reviews and rates no fewer than 58 different CPC motor racing games! All in all, a pretty excellent read.

## PRESTO NEWS

Editor: Matthew Gullam  
Address: 1 Pembroke Close, The Mount, Par, Cornwall PL24 2BT  
Price: £1.00 (inc p&p)  
Content: Mainly PD  
Frequency: Monthly

Launched alongside the new Presto PD library (same address), *Presto News* is not afraid to examine issues like the failure of the GX4000 or the 'death' of 3-inch disks. The editor seems a little wary of 'legal' aspects, including a note to the effect that Clint Eastwood's appearance on the cover does not mean he endorses the magazine! It's a word processed cut and paste job, with the odd bit of clip art here and there. An interesting mag, though you don't really get many words for your wonga.

## PRINT OUT

Editor: Thomas Defoe  
Address: 8 Maze Green Road, Bishop's Stortford, Herts CM23 2PJ  
Price: £1.10 (inc p&p)  
Content: Serious  
Frequency: Bi-monthly

Thomas is stopping doing *Print Out* very shortly, but a team of PD celebs (including the dudes behind *Robot* and *Dartsma*) are taking over. We'll be reporting on the new set up very shortly. In the meantime, we'll just tell you that *Print Out* is packed full of techie tips, tutorials and type in listings. Though overshadowed by *WACCI*, it will no doubt be a valuable read for all you techie types out there. We await any changes with interest.

## WACCI

Editor: Clive Bellaby  
Address: 12 Trafalgar Terrace, Long Eaton, Nottingham NG10 1GP  
Price: £1.50 (inc p&p)  
Content: Serious  
Frequency: Monthly

The big-daddy of them all is back on the block. If you're serious about CPC-ing then *WACCI* is for you. With programming tutorials, loads of letters, a hefty dose of humour and the hand of the CPC's biggest user group behind it, this is a fanzine to contend with. The *WACCI* dudes now have a regular page in AA (see page 25). If you're serious about getting serious, you'd better start getting *WACCI* (wacky, geddit? - oh, never mind).



# technical forum

What's giving you more headaches than Kylie's latest single? If it's a problem concerned with your computer then simply ask consultant tech ed Adam Waring - he'll prescribe a dose of pain-relieving answers.

And there's more - within this section are top tips; handy hints sent in by readers eager to help and earn themselves a tanner, Ask Alex where all the thickies get put right, reviews and a helpline for when Mr W can't help. **Technical Forum: I never knew there was so much in it!**

Whatever your dilemma, send it in to: Technical Forum, Amstrad Action, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW

## SCART SUCCESS

I have a 6128 Plus computer with the new style monitor and have tried to connect the monitor to a video recorder via the latter's Scart socket, but so far without success. I can get the sound coming out of both speakers, but no picture whatsoever. As far as I can tell the connections are correct, but the screen remains black. Would it be possible to print a wiring diagram for this set up? I'm sure other readers would find it useful as well.

Robin Brown  
Smithton, Inverness

The Scart system is a standard designed to link devices that use audio/video together using a standardised set of connections. However, individual pieces of equipment may not have every single connection present, in which case those pins will be unconnected.

It's not that common for videos to be equipped with RGB output that your monitor uses. They tend to use a video signal output instead, so it could well be the case that you're going to be out of luck. Consult the manual that came with the video for details. If it does have RGB, then a local electronics store will be able to wire up a cable.

## ASSEMBLY TIME

I have an Amstrad 464 computer. It is a wonderful computer and has served me

well; I have upgraded it by adding two disk drives, a 64K RAM extension and a DMP 2000 printer. I have two questions:

1. I saw a 40025 upgrade ROM being advertised. What does it do and how do you install it?
2. Do you know of a good, value-for-money machine code assembler that's a reasonable price (under £50)?

James Holdaway  
Wimbourne, Dorset

The ROM you mention is actually the ROM that's built in to the 6128. By fitting it to a 464, along with disk drive and additional memory, it becomes fully 6128 compatible. Since you already have the other two items, add the ROM and you'll be able to run any program a 6128 can.

This won't widen the scope of commercial programs you can use that considerably as they tend to be written in machine code and don't extensively use the 6128's extra commands, but it is handy for BASIC programs, especially those marked '6128 only' in Type-Ins.

Installing it is a matter of opening up your machine's casing, prising the old ROM out with a screwdriver, and popping the new one in its place. At any rate, most suppliers of these ROMs provide fitting instructions when you buy them.

One of the very best assemblers available for the Amstrad is the Maxam assembler from Arnor. This comes in tape, disk and ROM formats.

For the latter you need to buy a ROM box, which plugs into the back of computer. The advantage of this is that it's always there to be accessed by a simple command, without having to wait it to load. It also means that you have a lot more memory available to develop programs. All three options will cost you less than £50.

An even cheaper option is to order a back issue of Amstrad Action. We gave away the complete Devpac assembler from Hisoft on issue 71's covertape. This complete package has an assembler, for developing your code, and a monitor to help you sort out why it all went horribly wrong. Turn to the subscriptions page for details on how to get hold of this issue!

## WHAT'S THE USER?

I am a 464 owner and cannot for the life of me get your covertapes to transfer to different user areas of my disk. I need to get a number of covertapes, each with the same filenames, on one disk and the only way I can see of doing this is to store the different covertapes in different user areas (as you suggested in issue 79).

I have tried to change the user number before loading the tape, but on transferring I have found the files are saved in user area 0 regardless. Please could you give me some tips to get round this problem as I hate to see wasted disk space.

N Durrington  
Warrington, Cheshire

Copy the files as normal from tape into user area 0 using the normal transfer method. Once this is done you will have to rename all the files individually so that they are prefixed with the name of the user area you wish to store them in.

Say, for example, you wish to store some programs from the covertape in user area 2. Type this:

IREN,"2:1.BIN","1.BIN"

Repeat this process for all the files until the whole lot have been renamed. Adam's your Uncle, they will all be safely tucked away in your new area.

## THE WORD IS

We use our recently acquired second-hand CPC664 as both a games machine and as a word processor along with our DMP2000 printer. There is a wide variety of type styles available on the DMP2000 which are easily accessed through BASIC (tedious) or the Easy Electric Typewriter type-in in the printer's manual. This only allows correction of the current line of text which is then echoed to the printer. If we are typing enthusiastically, we may be several lines past an error before noticing it, when it is no longer correctable.

We also use the Advanced (?) Amstrad word processor which is tedious and inconvenient, but offers the usual editing facilities. We find

that we cannot access most of the printer control characters, none of the Tasprint options nor any of the second character set. Is this because the DMP2000 does not emulate the FX-80 as required by Amstrad? Can we access the DMP typesets in conjunction with the editing facility of Amstrad?

A recent AA review of CPC word processing software packages suggests that we should be buying something else, but we would like to make the most of the software we already have if possible.

Without being snippy, as a word processing system the CPC plus Amstrad is light years behind the IBM

PC 486 with seamless WP and Pagemaker desktop publishing which I use at work. It's a pity you can't get all that into 64K!

Trevor Furnass  
Kendal, Cumbria

You can't seriously be comparing a state-of-the-art (for a PC) dedicated business machine worth several thousands of pounds, running professional, dedicated software costing many hundreds to a second-hand CPC running a word processor written several years ago? Oh, you are.

Amstrad is a dinosaur, I'm afraid

Trevor, when compared to any one of a number of CPC word processors available for your computer. If you're at all serious about using your machine for letter writing then you'll upgrade your word processor. Have another look at that Buyers' Guide. Particularly recommended are Protex by Arnor and Brunword from Brunning software. Then you'll see what the machine you've got is really capable of...

There's some pretty hot DTP programs available as well. I'll be the first to admit that they're not going to be quite as capable as Pagemaker, but you can have a lot of fun hacking out the odd fanzine or newsletter on your CPC.

## DRIVING GAME

One type letter that I see quite often is from those who've bought an additional higher-capacity disk drive and then can't get hold of software to run on it.

Take Gateshead's Daniel Davison, for instance:

"I was wondering if you can get games such as Pit Fighter on 3.5 inch disks for the 464."

I'm afraid that the answer is no, Dan! Games manufacturers generally will only produce games on tape or 3-inch disk. This is because that these are the standard formats that most Amstrad owners have. There simply isn't a big enough user base out there to support games being released on the larger-format 3.5 inch disks. A pity as these are cheaper to produce and can store a lot more data. Sorry!

## POKE PROBS

Helen Jenkins, who lives in Neath in sunny West Glamorgan, has been having problems with the pokes that have recently started to appear on Amstrad Action's cover tapes. She enjoyed the games that came on the tapes, she says, but comes stuck when it comes to the pokes we've given away recently.

"I cannot load pokes (A) or (B). I run the menu program and select the pokes but the computer comes up with a message saying that you have to load this from BASIC." Exactly how to do this is the gist of her question.



# Ask Alex...

Problems, problems, problems. If you've got 'em, I'm here to answer them (as long as they're about computers, not acne or girlfriend troubles - though no doubt I could offer a few wise words in that department!)

Make sure that you keep them simple, though, anything in the least bit technical should be addressed to Adam's Forum section. This section is completely for beginners only!

So if you're dumfounded by your CPC, get writing! The address is: Ask Alex, Amstrad Action, Beauford Court, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW

Basically, Helen, these pokes are loaded in a very similar way to the Menu program on the cover tape, but with using LOAD "poke name" instead. The poke name should be replaced by the name printed in the magazine, listed under the heading, 'Pokes'. (You'll have to fast forward the tape a little on side B first though, or you'll be waiting for ages for them to load!)

But first you should make sure that you understand what these programs are for in the first place.

They don't actually do an awful lot on their own, but need to be used in conjunction with the games that they are designed to poke into. Make sure that you have these games or you won't get anywhere!

A fuller description of the pokes, what games they're designed to work with, and what they do exactly, is given in the Cheat Mode

section of the magazine.

When you run these pokes, followed by the game itself, you will have all manner of cheats at your disposal! Should help you make short work of it!

## MICE ADVICE

Alan Southerland and family from Beccles, Suffolk are new to the Amstrad. They want get into DTP and art software, and want to know:

"What extra memory do we need and what mice are suitable for the 664?"

Though you don't actually need any extra memory, the best art and DTP packages require a 64K RAM expansion. As for a mouse, the Genius is one of the best. Both are available from Datel Electronics ☎ 0782 744707

# HELP

Do you have a problem? Well get some help! There are 37,000 Amstrad Action readers out here just itching to lend a helping hand. (Well, some of them are anyway.) If you're after an obscure double-hinged spigot interface, want to swap your Ferrari for a 464 with green-screen monitor, or maybe could do with a little bit of help with that nuclear power station control program that keeps going wrong then this is the place to write to. On the other hand you could have the sort of expert knowledge that you just know someone will benefit from. In this case, where better to offer your services?

If so, drop a line to Technical Helpline, preferably on a postcard or sealed-down envelope. Don't forget to include your phone number - sorry, we're unable to print addresses. Send your entry to: **Technical Helpline, Amstrad Action, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW**

I need a TV modulator for the CPC6182. Will swap for Kick Off Collection, other games, of green screen monitor.  
Wayne, 071-700 0715

I have a 3.5 inch second disk drive but need a formatter for it. Can anyone help? I will pay expenses.  
Alan, 061-620 1680 after 4pm

Wanted: Disk drive for 464 Plus, two-way port expansion, Wave Widget, 64K RAM expansion. Will exchange for Atari VCS Games System plus games and two joysticks.  
Sue, 0501 41803

Wanted: Circuit diagram for CPC 6128 or part circuit of REM control section. Also circuit for camcorder to CPC digitiser.  
Jack, 061-775 8444

I need the Microtext Teletext adaptor, tuner and software for my Amstrad CPC 6128. Reasonable price paid.  
Jan Balling, Baunevej 139, DK-2630 Taastrup, Denmark

SOFT 968 wanted to borrow, buy etc. I'll pay just to lend it for the week, so please somebody, this is an opportunity to make money for nothing.  
Paul, 0446 736529 after 6pm

Has anyone got a copy of AA33 with the joystick splitter thingy in it? I'll pay. Also can help in most aspects of BASIC.  
David, 0869 252270







# mastering machine code

This month the Amstrad's low memory vectors (a complicated term for simple routines!) are explored. These are probably the most under rated life savers of the Z80. To find out more, ANDY PRICE was locked in a little room at the AA offices, and forced to tell us all about them...

**What are** low memory vectors? These are little routines which are stored in RAM when your computer is switched on and which can be accessed by calling routines at the very base of your computer's memory, hence the term 'low memory vector'.

These routines can be absolute lifesavers, as you will soon discover when you start to program at any great depth. There will be many times when most of your registers will be used up and the only remaining register is not the one you need. These routines will perform otherwise 'illegal' Z80 operations legally. That is, you can perform some instruction using the wrong register.

These routines lie in the first &40 bytes of RAM and are placed there on power-up (&0000 to &003F). Another name for the low memory vectors is 'restart instructions' (RST instructions). There are routines which lie between these addresses which are accessed without the RST instruction.

**So, you want** to know how to use them do you? To access these gems, we use the RST instruction (restart). There are seven of these in total. Also, there are other routines held between these addresses which are accessed with the standard CALL or JP commands. I'll restrict myself to the most useful ones, both RST and those accessed with the standard jump or call.

## RST 0

This resets your computer totally, as if you have just powered up. To use this instruction, type RST 0

from assembly. To see just what the effect is, try CALL 0 from BASIC.

## RST 1

This is the routine the firmware uses to access the routines in the lower ROM when you call a firmware routine. All of the firmware routines are held in the lower ROM. Using this routine, you can call or jump to a routine held in the lower ROM or RAM.

I don't really want to show you how to use this routine because it gets complicated; a simple version is RST 5, which is explained below. But, if you want to examine the routines the firmware uses, disassemble address &B000 to &BD37, which will give you a lot of RST 1 address instructions, and to get the address in the lower ROM where those routines are, subtract &8000 from the address! If you have MAXAM, you can then inspect the lower ROM.

**Address #000E** This is one of those lifesaving routines! What would happen if you wanted to perform a JP (HL) instruction, but the address to jump to is in the BC register? Simple, you would call this address. It does a JP (HL) with the address in BC!

**Address #0016** Yet another program saver (which I frequently use, mainly because I tend to use any free register, which is generally the register I need in a minute or two). This does the same as the routine at address #000E but performs it using the more used DE register (phew!).

## RST 4

Right then, for the sake of argument, let's say that

you or another program, or even your assembler, has paged in the lower ROM (so that it occupies addresses &0000 to &3FFF for reading only purposes only). You also want to read a byte from the main memory which now lies under the paged in ROM. You will need to use this instruction. It is the equivalent to the LD A,(HL) instruction but it ignores the fact that the ROM is paged in. This can save you a lot of time and effort.

## RST 5

This is the routine I would recommend using if you wish to run a program in the lower ROM, in preference to the RST 1 instruction. When this routine is called, it enables the lower ROM for you, and when the program ends, it disables it for you. This is quicker than the RST 1 instruction. Just enter the actual address you want, without taking into account the ROM states, e.g. RST 5,&3000 run the program at address &3000 in the lower ROM. It saves the arithmetic a bit!

## RST 6 at address #0030

This is intended for your own use; you make your own low memory vector. Patch the address with an instruction like JP #BE00 to run a program at that address when you use RST 6. It could save you numerous program bytes.

## RST 7

Used by interrupts which, if you read the previous instalment, you should know all about.

## THE ONLY LISTING THIS MONTH!

Here is a program demonstrating the use of the low memory vectors. To understand what the program does and how it works, read the comments in the code...

```

ORG #9000
ENT $

; Patch routine to point RST 6 to
; program at address #BF00

LD A,#C3          ; byte for JP instruction
LD (#0030),A
LD HL,ROUT        ; address
LD (#0031),HL

; The part is the main program, shows how to run
; our own RST routine, executed using RST 6

LD DE,TESTED_JP_DE
JP #0016          ; JP (HL) instruction using
                  ; the DE register

TESTED_JP_DE:
RST 6             ; call our own RST routine
RET

; This is the part which is called when
; RST 6 is used. This just prints a string
; on the screen but you can alter it to do
; what you wish.

ROUT: LD DE,MESS
LOOPER: LD A,(DE)
OR A             ; end of string (have we reached 0)?
RET Z           ; yes, exit
CALL #BBSA      ; no, print character
INC DE
JR LOOPER
MESS: DEFN "Just testing AA's home made RST 6 routine"
DEFB 0

```

# The Wacci Page

Amstrad Action has got together with its buddies at Wacci to produce a brand new section - 'The Wacci Page'. Wacci is a user group with some 400 members, all of whom are complete tech-nutters. So that Wacci's expertise and know-how can reach a wider audience, we're giving it this spot in the mag to provide its own pot pourri of techie, tutorials, top tens, news and views from the Serious Side of the CPC...

## ROMDOS DOS IT ALL

Anyone who has invested in a Romboard, ROMDOS and a 3.5 inch external disc drive will not need me to tell them what a wise move it was. If it wasn't for the enormous increase in disc storage capacity which it brings, it would be easy to forget that ROMDOS is at work. And therein lies its beauty....it's 'invisibility' makes it a doddle for anyone to use.

To achieve this, ROMDOS does not claim any memory for its own use but instead, uses the workspace already claimed by AMSDOS and patches the jumpblocks to intercept calls to disc routines. As a result, any program that works under AMSDOS will work under ROMDOS. But what about those programs that will not run from, or recognise, a ROMDOS format disc?

Two notable examples of this type of program are the Advanced Art Studio and Stop Press. The reason that they do not work with ROMDOS is quite simply that they do not look for it.

Both these programs use BASIC loaders to get the program code into memory. Control is then passed to the program code with a CALL command. At this point machine code takes over and makes a call to the firmware routine at &BD16 and then &BCCE. And that is where the trouble starts.

MC START PROGRAM at &BD16 resets the computer, but stops short of initialising any ROMS (Bye-bye ROMDOS).

KL INIT BACK at &BCCE is used to initialise AMSDOS (rom No.7) so that further files or data can be loaded from or saved to disc. This initialisation resets the Disc Parameter Blocks for both drives to their default settings (ie. Normal AMSDOS formats), then selects Drive A and User Area 0.

Now you know why you get the dreaded "Drive A: Disc Missing" or "Drive B: Read Fail" messages with these programs.

So that's the bad news. The good news is that it's perfectly possible to write a Poke to give "serious" users infinite lives just like the "gamers" get in Cheat Mode. Infinite lives? Well how about "ROMDOS compatibility". It may not sound as exciting but it's probably a lot more useful. All that is needed is an extra bit of code to initialise ROMDOS immediately after initialising AMSDOS. And lo and behold, here is just such a poke ....

10 'ART STUDIO Loader for ROMDOS

20 'Replaces STUDIO.BAS

30 '(c) Jess Harpur 1992

40 '

50 MEMORY 5000:adr=&780

60 LOAD"studio.bin",&1400

70 READ a\$

80 IF a\$="end" THEN CALL &780

90 POKE adr,VAL("&"+a\$)

100 adr=adr+1:GOTO 70

110 DATA 21,00,14,11,00,00,01,00

120 DATA 84,ED,B0,2A,7D,BE,7E,32

130 DATA AB,07,21,9A,07,0E,FF,C3

140 DATA 16,BD,21,FF,AB,11,40,00

150 DATA 0E,07,CD,CE,BC,0E

160 DATA 1 'ROMDOS's slot number

170 DATA CD,CE,BC,3E,00,2A,7D,BE

180 DATA 77,C3,86,09,end

This BASIC program will allow you to run Art Studio from a ROMDOS (or AMSDOS) format disc in Drive

## WACCI - The Club

In 1986, Wacci founder Jeff Walker decided that a computer club (dedicated to the more 'serious' aspects of computing) would find a niche for itself, he was right, and WACCI was born.

Today WACCI has over 400 club members (and is still growing). WACCI produces a 32 page, 27000 word monthly magazine covering such diverse topics as programming (Basic, Machine code and Forth), reviews of commercial and public domain software, members letters and comms. WACCI also runs a bulletin board (0252 318557), which is open 24 hours a day to both members and non-members.

The organisation is non-profit making, and supplies goods to members at near trade prices, such as blank discs at £14.80 for ten, 2-In-1 at £20 and the complete Micro Design Plus package from Campursoft at £28.

Club members are always willing to help and assist members in overcoming technical problems, either through the letters section or through the telephone help-line service.

WACCI currently has 30 discs in its public domain library (and it's growing by an average of 4 discs per month) and a homegrown library with 15 discs. Discs cost £3 each, including the disc and p&p. WACCI runs tape and book lending libraries for club members.

All in all, it's a fun place for those who want to do more with their CPC than just zap aliens, to 'meet' other CPC owners who also want to do more than just zap aliens.

WACCI costs £1.50 per issue: for a 'free' sample copy send a 34p stamp and your name and address to WACCI, c/o Clive Bellaby, 12 Trafalgar Terrace, Long Eaton, Nottingham, NG10 1GP

B, and to load and save screens etc. using ROMDOS format discs. Edit line 160 to suit, if you have ROMDOS in a different slot in your romboard.

● A note of warning though; Art Studio often reports that there is less free space on a ROMDOS format disc than there actually is. The Disc Full error message is the true indicator

By Jess Harpur of WACCI & Campursoft

## WACCI's top ten serious products

- 1 **Protext, Promerge & Prospell** - probably the most versatile WP package available for the CPC. (Used by WACCI to produce WACCI.)
- 2 **Printer** - You can't really be serious without one, any type will do, 9 pin, 24 pin or even the latest bubble jet.
- 3 **Disc drive**, essential for saving your important development work. 3.5 inch disc drives are preferable, 800k of software on a disc that costs around 60p is not to be sniffed at.
- 4 **Modem** - (and loads of money to pay the phone bill) No serious CPC user is prepared to wait for software to arrive by snail mail.
- 5 **Programming language discs**. Forth, MBasic, Cobol, Pascal, C, Lisp, Prolog, Expert86 and many others are available from good PD software libraries (and they only cost around £3 each.) They are ideal for learning the rudiments of a language before you go out and splash £40 of your hard earned cash on the commercial item.
- 6 **Micro Design**. Probably the best CPC art package around - Used by WACCI to fulfil all its artistic needs.
- 7 **Alarm Clock** - Set to 4am, so you'll go to bed and get at least 3 hours sleep after a hard nights work.
- 8 **ROMDOS** - no self respecting large format disc drive should leave home without it. Invisible in use, it reacts instantly to whichever format of disc you decide to stick in the drive.
- 9 **Rombox** - After all you need something to plug ROMDOS into. You'll save hours of loading time every year as your favourite programs load in a flash.
- 10 **Your favourite games disc**, it can be any of them; Chess, Space Invaders, Elite or Dominoes. There's nothing wrong with playing games - everybody needs to relax occasionally.



## 27





● German tanks close in on a lone British infantry unit.



● But luckily his friends have landed, and they rush to his aid.



● Oh no! Those tempting souvenir shops have waylaid them!



● And a disaster occurs. The 3rd Foot and Mouth are wiped out.

1943. North Africa is in the bag. The Germans, with their millions of tanks and their lethal 88mm artillery pieces, have been given a bloody nose. The people of Tunisia, Egypt and Libya can breathe a sigh of relief, knowing that the evil Nazi menace has receded (or been blown to dust).

So what next for the victorious Allies? South Africa? No, they're our chums. Gambia perhaps? They should be easy to beat. No, it's got to be Italy, land of wine, fast cars and women with large behinds.

The Allies fondly believed that if they bunged thousands of blokes into Sicily and Italy, Hitler would divert thousands of his blokes to defend it and make things easier for the English to land in France. A classic plan if ever there was one.

On the 9th of September, Operation Avalanche swung into, er, operation. The Germans, possibly having received pre-production copies of this game, were ready and waiting for them in just the right place. A fierce scrap started.

As Commander of either the

# avalanche

CCS • 081 558 5274 • £12.95 CASSETTE, £12.95 DISK

Germans or the Allies, you can move your troops around, call in airborne help and basically do what you hope the enemy isn't expecting.

At the start, when you choose sides, you can also fiddle with the unshakeable facts of history. You can choose to have the Italians on either side (insert any Italian joke here), and can speed up or slow down the Allied reinforcements.

Then, as if by magic, a blocky map of Italy unfolds before your disbelieving eyes.

From then on, you're in the thick of the battle. But don't expect the urgency of War to flood out of your screen into your living room, scaring the cat. Because things do not happen quickly. First it's the German Air phase. If you're playing the Allies (which, for the sake of this review and political credibility in general, I'll assume), you must wait while the

## SECOND OPINION

"Wargames are one of those things you really need to be a fan of to fully appreciate. I'm not, and therefore I consider *Avalanche* a load of old nob."

ADAM PETERS

Teutonic terror makes two or three of your little unit characters flash. This, we are told, is the might of the Luftwaffe unleashed on the plucky, cowering Brits.

If you've survived the withering air assault, the Germans then move. The map scrolls slowly from unit to unit, as they chug over the green and pleasant landscape of Southern Italy. Time passes.

Then you get to drop bombs on the Germans from the air. You have three attempts. Following that, a few more phases happen, which involve a lot of SPACE bar pressing and not-very-interactive watching. Then you

move. One by one, you select your units using the cursor keys. You move the cursor to where you ultimately want them to end up, and they promise to do their best. Some more time passes.

Then war happens. When two or more opposing units meet, they take it in turns to flash. Sadly, no immediate details are available to tell you what damage has been done to who. If a unit gets too knackered, it withdraws, or disappears completely.

As long as you're not stupid, beating either side on Beginner mode is just a matter of time. You have to be patient, and keep plugging away solidly. Any heroic stuff by individual units almost always results in complete death for your boys.

*Avalanche* isn't as exciting as the real Italian campaign. There must be a lot of processing going on in the old Z80, but it's certainly very slow. All keypresses are buffered, so if you hit a key a few times in frustration, you could end up by withdrawing completely, handing Britain to the Allies and digging a shallow trench in which to fall after they've shot you.

The strategic element is well thought out, though. A lot of care has obviously gone into getting the scenario historically accurate.

This technical aspect is the game's strongest point. And it's mildly interesting to see if you, playing the Germans this time, can halt the flow of plucky Brits and turn the tide of the War back in favour of the manic tee-total vegetarian with the laughable moustache.

James Leach

## FIRST DAY TARGET SCORE

Win as Allies on easy level

## TWO WARS AND ONE WORLD CUP

Beating the Germans isn't too tough if you set the Italians on your side too (no joke is necessary here). You simply amalgamate your forces into the largest lump possible, and engulf any Nazi units that happen to stray into your path.

Here, the Allies are getting together a fairly decent collection. Once it's big enough, you can rampage around the Italian countryside with impunity. The same used to be true of Trafalgar Square.

Towns, airports and naval bases are key areas to head for. Each has victory points attached, and even if your forces are taking a pummeling, you can still win by controlling vast tracts of open spaghetti-growing country, and key towns, bridges and sports-car factories.

Press SPACE



## graphics

Just like every other CCS wargame, *Avalanche* has a scrolly map with some blocky sprites moving around.

## sonics

The horrifying furnace of battle sounds a bit like R2-D2, sadly.

## grab factor

Pitting large amounts of military hardware against each other is always good for a giggle.

## staying power

Play it how you want. Attack, defend, eat pasta and watch in dismay at your pathetic troops.

# 65% VERDICT

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## LOTUS ESPRIT TURBO CHALLENGE

GBH • £3.99

Don that helmet, stick empty fag packets, drink cans and oil canisters all over your shirt, making sure the brand names are clearly visible (sponsorship) and leap into that, er, armchair. Lotus Esprit is AA's second favourite drive-em-up of all time, and here's why:

The beautifully detailed mode 1 graphics are a joy to behold. The split-screen two player mode will have you and your opponent on the edge of the sofa, with gritty determination etched all your faces. Nine different tracks to hurtle round means a major league long term challenge.



■ Vroom. I've got that blighter in my sights, time to put the pedal to the metal.



■ Ha ha! I'm up with him (or her) and all set to shoot through on the inside. Maybe.

What really sets Lotus Esprit apart, though, is the gameplay. Basically, you hit that accelerator and keep your eyes peeled for the arrows that indicate an upcoming corner. Sounds just like any other racing game, huh? Maybe, but when you meet that corner, skilful steering will see you through. The back of the car ahead of you comes into view, and it's time to chase.

All driving sims are not the same. The collision detection in this one is spot on, overtaking involves a real cat-and-mouse tussle, and everything from the steering to the narrow road view has realism stamped all over it. Vorsprung durch damn good game, as we like to say every now and then.

**AAA 91%  
VERDICT**

## MANCHESTER UNITED

GBH • £3.99

We love a decent footie game. Even a half-decent footie game, like this one, gets a pretty big hug.

The predecessor to current chart stonker Man United Europe, Manchester United is a similar management-cum-arcade football game. The main difference is that it's set in the gutsy domestic league, rather than glamorous Euro competition.

The arcade section is more or less identical to

# action replay

Budget Bonanza is no more. But hold those tears folks, we've killed off BB so we could give more space to reviews of budget games.

New titles get full size Action Test reviews. Re-released games get extended goings-over in our spanky new Action Replay bit. ADAM PETERS shines the big light and asks some difficult questions...

its successor, with the sprites being slightly smaller. It's a bit slower too, but bearing in mind that it's a third of the price of the new game, it's still got to be a shopper's choice best buy!

So what do you do? The game is split into two sections; the icon-driven management section, and the arcade game section. Loading up the former, you can select teams, buy and sell players, train your bunch, and so on and so forth. Once you feel ready for the match itself, load up the second program and get set to start booting that ball around.

The two separate sections arrangement is going



■ Manchester United - the game's not as hot as the team, but it ain't bad though.

to cause a fair amount of irritation, seeing as it does mean you get five minutes of play followed by five minutes of loading, five minutes of play followed by five minutes of loading, five minutes of play followed by five minutes of loading, and so on.

The arcade section is nothing to write home about, the scrolling is jolty, the play is sluggish, but at least it's easy to control and the computer opponent is a sturdy one. Nothing special, but not bad.

**AAA 69%  
VERDICT**

## NAVY MOVES

HIT SQUAD • £3.99

In the wild world of computer gaming there are a few perceived wisdoms; all US Gold coin-op convos are boring (not always true), all Domark games are crap (more or less true) and all Dinamic games are far too, far too difficult.

So how true is that last statement then? Here we



■ Brill. I'm out for a little cruise round Greenwich boating lake. This is the life.

get another opportunity to examine one of the items of evidence for the prosecution. Navy Moves is the sequel to Army Moves. It doesn't take a degree from Sherlock Holmes University to realise the blistering action of the first game has been moved from land to sea, and your bum, once attached to the seat of a jeep, is now fixed firmly to the vinyl of a dinghy.

The idea is to waggle the joystick furiously in such a way that your dinghy doesn't crash into any of the big mines that someone has absent-mindedly left lying all over the ocean. This is tricky. Very tricky. The amount of practice, patience and skill required to get through this first level is phenomenal.

If you manage it, you are then presented with the second part. This is set on the enemy sub, things get a tad easier, and enemy guards are the main opposition. But most people will give up before reaching this stage. A good game, spoiled by the Spanish softies' traditional over-high difficulty level.

**AAA 52%  
VERDICT**



■ It's not a boating lake after all, and I've just driven into a mine. What a dweeb.



■ Puzznic is a lovely little puzzle game, with sweet little fruitie pictures in it.

## PUZZNIC

HIT SQUAD • £3.99

Puzzle games, don'tcha just love them? The graphics are usually dire, the speed often snail-like, the action as intense as a totally un-intense thing, but still think-em-ups make for some of the most engrossing games you can get. Vorsprung durch Tetris.

Puzznic is one of the better puzzles. It finished eighth in our recent Buyers' Guide, and any brain-twisters out there would be well advised to make a bee-line for the budgie shelves.

As with all great puzzle games, the idea is incredibly simple. There are lots of blocks on screen, some of which have little symbols on them. You can move these around the screen, but beware of that naughty law of physics called 'gravity'. The blocks will fall downwards till they reach one of the many plain blocks that make up the 'map'.



■ This level is dead easy, but it gets harder as you progress and the mazes get bigger.

There's eight levels, and a total of 36 different sets of four puzzles. That's a total of 144 different puzzles. You can start on any of the first three levels, and once you've completed that set of four puzzles, you can select which set on the next level you'd like to go for. It's very much a case of pot-luck, but there are more different sets of puzzles on the higher levels, so if you get stuck there are a greater number of options available.

Puzznic clocks up a whopping eight points on the spankyometer. Buy.

**AAA 87%  
VERDICT**

## SEYMOUR GOES TO HOLLYWOOD

CODEMASTERS • £3.99

Re-release? This is a new game surely, and didn't AA review it several months ago. Right, here's the facts:

we reviewed Seymour in AA74 thinking it was an ordinary £3.99 release. But it wasn't. It was initially only available on the Cartoon Collection compilation. But now it is a £3.99 release. And it's so darned spinky, spanky and sponky that we don't need much of an excuse to review it again.

Seymour is a potato-shaped ball of lard who snatched Dizzy's crown whilst the prima donna egg was busy getting lost in the Spellbound biopic. Seymour is an actor dude who has got to get some dynamite to blow up a safe to get a script to a film he's supposed to be starring in. Why? Who cares.

The ensuing shenanigans is set in the film company's offices, the maze-like studio network, the jungle and tree-huts sec-



■ Hmm, choices. We recommend you try the studios first. Tip: look for a dictionary.

tion, and a desert island. Oh yes, and on the sets of numerous films (Grease, King Kong, Dick Tracy, Flash Gordon, etc).

To say the game is difficult would be roughly akin to saying that Christina Applegate out of Married with Children is moderately attractive. It's very difficult. Mega super extra difficult. With hundreds and thousands on top.



■ Pippa the grumpy receptionist: character based on a chum of Pete Ranson's (true).

Even if you can get the script, you then have to retrace your steps, find sixteen Oscars and give one out to each character. Instant death at the hands of Emperor Ming will have you screaming in frustration.

We printed a full solution in Cheat Mode last month. Don't think you're not going to need (at least some of) it.

**AAA 92%  
VERDICT**

## TURRICAN 2

KIXX • £3.99

Yowsur McTower! This game got a whopping 95% when first reviewed, and you dudes out there in readerland voted it Full-Price Game of the Year in our readers' poll.

It's been out on a number of compilations, and now you can pick it up for only £3.99. What do you get for your money? You get five massive (and we mean massive) levels of shoot-em-up action. Massive? How many screens are there then? Er, 1500. No, that's not a misprint: there are one thousand five hundred screens in this game. Phew!

You play Commander John Turrican, you're tooled up with three different weapons (an ordinary blaster, a big laser-stick kind of thing, and some smart bombs). It's firepower city, with buckets of different bad guys and a whole wide world to explore.

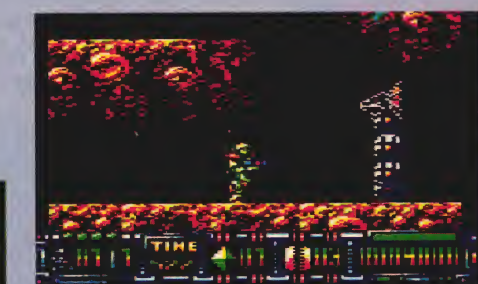
It's not all running and jumping, mind. Level two sees you at the controls of a spaceship, a la R-Type.

What else can we say about this game? It's big, the graphics are breathtaking, and you can't keep away from it. Some of you out there will have had your gaming appetites whetted by the AA73 cover-tape demo, but Mr Piggy Bank wouldn't let you get the game proper. Well now you can.

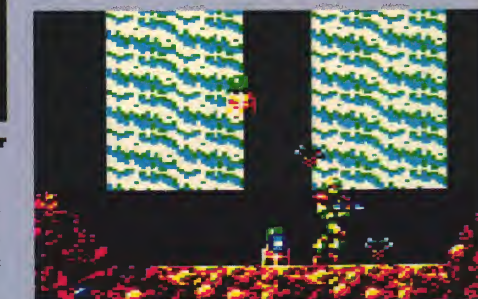
Steal your mates' dinner money.

Hold up a bank.

Kill to own this game...



■ Oh no, it's a monster made out of mouldy fried eggs. A few blasts will get rid of it.



■ There's loads of water around the place, as well as waterfalls. And rocks by the ton.

**AAA 95%  
VERDICT**

## ding-a-ling

Having trouble getting hold of a game? Give these dudes a ring:

CodeMasters • 0926 814132

GBH • 0742 753423

Hit Squad • 061-832 6633

Kixx • 021-625 3388





■ Mind that spook! Your mud pies can't kill it, only send it away.



■ Ulp... you've got to go through this graveyard. Mind the skellies!



■ You can send old bony-legs back underground with enough mud pies.



■ Ach! You're going to see that 'game over' message all too often...

**Bangers and Mash**, lovely, eh? Great, steaming plates of the stuff... just a bit of mustard and salt and pepper and... wait a minute, how can you make a game out of a plate of nosh?

Well you can't, really. Not unless you first of all invent a cartoon TV series about a couple of chimps who just happen to be called Bangers and Mash. Then you make a game out of it, see?

Bangers and Mash are mischievous little monkeys. They play their old mum up a bit and are always getting into trouble. Until one day, mum gets a bit fed up and sends them both out to collect fruit for a giant fruit pie.

Wait a minute. If there are two chimps, how come you only control one of them in the game? Bangers is the one who does all the fruit-stalking, while Mash is nowhere to be seen. According to our notes, here, Mash is way up in the trees making giant mud pies to flatten the various nasties inhabiting the forest. Bit naff, we say.

Bangers can fling a few mud pies himself, mind – at the rate of around 120 a minute, in fact. These mud pies must have a few rocks accidentally mixed in, because they do a good job of wiping out the cuddly (but lethal) hedgehogs and cute ladybirds that prowl around

# BANGERS AND MASH

ALTERNATIVE SOFTWARE • 0977 797777 • £3.99 CASSETTE

the vegetation.

Even worse are the ghosts that occasionally put in an appearance. You can't kill them, but you can make them go away by throwing enough pies.

Look out too for Mrs Snitchnose, who flies around on her broomstick generally making a nuisance of herself.

Your aim is to climb right to the top of the forest, collecting every single fruit along the way. If you don't collect all the fruit you can't move on to the next level! Which is a bit of a pain in the neck, really,

considering that you have to enter a graveyard at one point to collect more fruit – and jump down a hollow tree trunk later on.

If you eventually make it to the top with all the fruit,

## SECOND OPINION

"It looks really blocky and doesn't move that well. But it's a decent enough platform game once you get into it. A bit more variety would have been nice."

ADAM PETERS

though, a balloon comes down and transports you to the next level. How exciting! Or is it? The next (and final) level is in the jungle again. There are no sub-levels (like graveyards or hollow tree trunks) this time, but the bad-

dies are tougher and the jumps harder to make. Bangers and Mash is jolly enough in a kiddies kind of way, but it's a bit flawed. It's very tough, for a start. And there really isn't a lot of variety. And the graphics, while colourful, and blocky and not very well animated. There's a fairly big game task, though, despite the fact there are only two levels.

Rod Lawton

freeze frame



■ Don't worry too much about these diamonds (1) because you don't need to collect them all to finish the level – they just give you extra points. What you do is collect all the bananas (2), apples and pears (your running total is displayed (3)). Bangers (4) can shoot the hedgehogs (5) and other nasties with his mud pies (6). So now you know!

## FIRST DAY TARGET SCORE

Collect all the fruit up to the tree trunk

## graphics

Distinctly cheap and cheerful. The Bangers sprite could be just about anything. The animation is iffy too.

## sonics

A few minimal fx just to let you know what's going on. There's no music.

54%

40%

## grab factor

Platform games always hook you straight away – so does Bangers & Mash.

## staying power

Only two levels, but they're quite big and tough. It's playable enough to keep you coming back for more.

85%

72%

71%  
VERDICT

# cheat mode

Welcome to another instalment of *Cheat Mode*. This is where champion cheat-finder PHIL HOWARD brings us the month's best hints, tips, solutions, passwords and more... PLUS, of course, full details on the game pokes supplied on the covertape. We pay £10 for the best cheats, and £20 for any pokes we use on the covertape. Send in your game-busting info to: Cheat Mode, Amstrad Action, Beauford Court, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW

## SMASH TV

Daniel Beeston of Ashton has put together a set of tips on how to get rid of the nasties in *Smash TV* (seems to involve a lot of standing in the corner).

**Fireballs** Make sure you are at the opposite side of the screen.

**Tank Trouble** Make sure you have the fireball gun and stand at the bottom left of the screen. When the first tank comes hold down the Fire button until you destroy it. Then run to the top left corner and fire diagonally to the bottom right (it needs a bit of skill).

**Mutoid Man** Stand in the top left corner and fire diagonally to the bottom right. Resist any temptation to collect a power-up while he is alive 'cos you'll almost certainly get hit.

**Orbs** Stand in the top left corner and fire right until the last orb is on the screen. Then shoot downwards until all the orbs are gone.

**Thugs** Stand somewhere across the top of the screen and fire downwards. Don't let any reach the top.

**Wiggly worms** Stand in one top corner and fire towards the other.

**Cobra death** Stand at the top corner of the screen and fire to the other top corner. When the

cobras get to your side of the screen wait until they go down and then run to the other top corner and fire the other way. Continue until they are all destroyed.

**Red Armchair thingies (single loop)** Stand at the top left corner of the screen and fire downwards.

**Red Armchair thingies (double loop)** Stand at the top left corner and fire diagonally to the bottom right.

**Mr Shrapnel** Stand behind him and fire until he goes to the other side of the screen. When he does, swap sides and continue.

● On the first level, when you get the choice go through a top door.

## Multiface Meritorium



Lots of letters have been flooding in praising the virtues of CPC Network's *Tearaway* utility, and asking that I point out how good it is... well there you go. It is extremely good, and well done James Verity. Now for the Multiface pokes, all of them this time from P.L. Curgenvin of Trevone Bay. Thanks, Pete!

NAME	ADDRESS	POKE	EFFECT
Seymour to Hollywood	61C8	00	Inf. lives
Wonderboy	52E2	00	Inf. lives
Troll	5461	00	Inf. lives
Jack the Nipper 2	5D23	00	Inf. Coconuts
Brainache	7312	00	Inf. lives
Titanic	41F9	00	Inf. lives
	4162	A7	Inf. Oxygen
Muggins the Spacenan	11A9	00	Inf. shots
Meganova	67C8	00	Inf. lives
Saboteur	B796	00	Inf. time
	B78E	00	
Spaced out	5886	00	Inf. time
Peter pack rat	8702	3A	Inf. time
	8EDF	00	Stops flies
Slug	073B	00	Inf. lives
	09A6	00	Inf. time
Strike force cobra	6943	A7	Stops timer
Chimera	9172	F0	Inf. water/food
Collapse	5F1D	AA	Stops timer
Chain Reaction	4A41	00	Stops timer
	4B81	00	Inf. lives
King tuts Pyramid	7471	00	Inf. water

Cop out	7462	A7	Inf. water
I ball 2	7105	A7	Inf. lives
	195B	00	Inf. lives
	21B2	00	Stops timer
	251D	00	No baddies
Ground zero	5AF8	00	Stops timer
Paws	293F	00	Inf stamina.
Crack up	1233	A7	Inf. lives
On the run	A48D	00	Energy
	B2F2	00	Inf. lives
Top cat	7C09	30	Stops clock.

**THE MULTIFACE WAY** The (t)s and (d)s before the address indicate whether the poke was written for a tape or disk game (they might work on both, its worth a try). Just in case you don't already how to put in these BLACK BOX POKES, here are the steps to success.

- Load the game as normal.
- Press the RED button on the MULTIFACE.
- Press "T" for tool.
- Press "\*" to make sure you select the code.
- Press "H" for HEXADECIMAL input.
- Press "SPACE" for input.
- Type in the ADDRESS (4 characters ie. 3A7C)
- Type in the POKE (2 characters ie. A7)
- Press "RETURN"
- If there is more than one poke goto (f)
- Press "ESC" back to the menu.
- Press "R" return to the game.
- "R" return to the game.



## HELP

If you're stuck on a game, or you simply can't get hold of an old classic, send a postcard (or write on the back of an envelope) to:

**Games Helpline**  
**Amstrad Action**  
**Beauford Court**  
**30 Monmouth Street**  
**Bath Avon BA1 2BW**

The normal Helpline rules apply:

DO try to keep it quick and simple – name the game, name your problem, and make sure it's a reasonable request!

DO include your first name and your telephone number. Sorry, we can't print full names and addresses.

DON'T try to advertise 'games for sale' – that's what the *Small Ads* page is for. This section is for people who need help only.

**Wanted: 464 tape versions of Get Dexter 2 (or even Get Dexter) and/or Doomsday Blues by RE International. Willing to swap or pay reasonably.**  
 Sagar, 081 864 2276 after 6pm

**I am looking for the game War in Middle Earth (tape/disk)**  
 Paul, 0282 32044 after 5pm

**Has anyone got Spyke in Transylvania for the Amstrad 464+ on tape?**  
 Mark 0482 705051

**Help needed on Spellbound Dizzy. Where is the aqualung? Help given on most Dizzy games.**  
 Peter, 0703 667501 mon-thurs

**Does anybody know the cheats for Salamander, Dragon Ninja, Gryzor and Predator? Help given on Operation Thunderbolt, Night Shift, Nebulus 2, Shadow Dancer, Gods, Blood Money and a few more.**  
 Peter, 0302 855107 6-9pm

## Keypress special!

As promised last month, here's a whole host of key-presses from Paul Harper of Folkestone. As yet some of them are untested (I can't get hold of all the games), but here's their chance to reach a wider audience anyway.



## SKATIN' USA

On the Urban Park title screen, type PARTY ON DUDES (inc. spaces) and a message

"Let the good times Roll!" pops up. You then get infinite lives and shots. Watch out for your bonus, though, since it can still get you.

## SPIKE IN TRANSILVANIA

On the title screen hold down the keys TAB,Q,J,I,U,S,A then the Space bar to start the game. When the game starts you will be in Pause mode. Press space to restart and you will have infinite energy.

## DIZZY DOWN THE RAPIDS

On the title screen, hold down the keys WIGMORE then start the game in the usual way – you will find you now have infinite energy.

## SUPER KID IN SPACE

On the Save the World title screen type PUT THE KETTLE ON GEOF (make sure you include the spaces) for infinite lives.

## DIZZY, PRINCE OF THE YOLK FOLK

It looks to me as though everyone has been playing Codemasters games just lately. Dizzy, Prince of the Yolk Folk seems to be the game on everyone's CPCs and solutions have been flowing thick and fast (is that a contradiction in terms or am I mixing metaphors?).

Graham Upton, Jamie Talbot, Philip Shaw, Simon Toller, Daniel Prest, Steven Benbow (and mum), Kevin Ribbens, David Robbins, Christopher Hawken, Jason Briggs, Mark Curzon, Kerry Fotheringham, Rachel Munns, Philip White, Noel "Nezza" Warham, Tim Johnson, Lee and Steve Kempin, Jonathan Constable, and Andrew Hackett are the names I have so far... (Now, I would give you all prizes, but you know how Rod is (tight as a filmstars frock!) so it's hand into the sack time for a winner, who is... Rachel Munns of Penarth.

Well done Rachel, sorry to the rest of you... keep on trying, though.

Pick up the Jug of Water, Book of Matches, Pile of leaves. Drop the leaves by the door, use the matches, and then the water to quench the flames. Talk to the Bugle boy who will give you a Magic Carpet. Go left and pick up the Heavy Pickaxe. Go right, jump onto the platform, go right twice. Pick up the Small Cage and talk to the lion. Go to the bottom of the hillside and drop the Pickaxe. Go left then up and get the Gold Nugget. Go back to the hillside and drop the pick-

axe. Go right to the bank of the river Styx. Catch the boat (be careful to move along with it).

Make sure that you have the gold nugget. Talk to the ferryman. Go right to the enchanted forest and drop the small cage by the Pogie. Go back to the top of the hill. Jump from the right of the screen and you should land on the cloud. Get the Acme bridge kit. Go up to the treehouse in the enchanted treetops. Jump onto the little platform near the right of the screen. Drop the bridge kit. Moving up jump from the rightmost platform. You should land on a cloud. Jump onto the next cloud and off the screen (but not from the edge of the cloud – you'll land in the nettles). Pick up the golden harp. Go right and jump the river. Go up to the uppermost branches, then left. Jump over the awfully high clouds. Talk to St. Peter. Drop the golden harp – he will give you some holy cheese. Go back to Pogie and drop the cheese in the cage. Take the Caged Fluffle to the castle's rear entrance. Drop Pogie by Rockwart and enter the castle. Go up the stairs and left then up the next set of stairs. Go to the castle ramparts and pick up the rusty old key. On the other side of the stairs and landing pick up the outboard motor. Go back across the river Styx. Give the motor to the ferryman. He will

give you a scythe. Return to the Tower drawbridge and use the scythe to clear the nettles. Go up to the Double Trouble screen. DO NOT pick up the spanner. Go through the inner sanctum into the deserted tower. Use the key to unlock Daisy's chamber. Don't bother kissing her, it doesn't work. Go back down, then past the bat and pick up the tweezers. Go to the top of the hill. Use the tweezers on the lion. Take the sharp thorn to the Double Trouble screen. Drop the thorn when you enter the screen. Go round to the top level. When the evil Dizzy walks over the thorn it will die. Get the spanner. Pick up the brass bugle. Give the brass bugle to the bugle boy – he will give you a jolly jokebook. Go to the castle drawbridge, drop the spanner on the jammed mechanism. Enter the gardens and talk to the princess. Give her the jolly jokebook and she will give you the regal flag. Take this to the castle ramparts and hang it on the flagpole. The Bugle boy comes to see if the king is back yet. Talk to him. He calls the king, who will make you prince of the Yolkfolk. Go to Daisy and wake her up with a kiss. All you need to do is collect the cherries to complete the game...

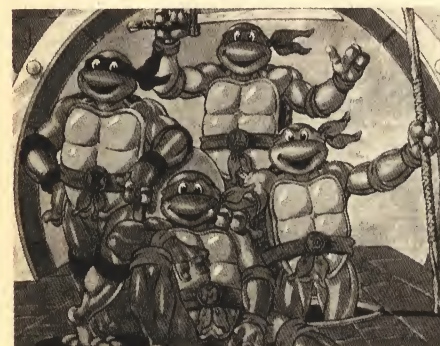
...gasp!

## Location of the cherries:

- Above the dungeon in Trapped
- By the torch in A Few Trees
- Behind the small cage in Top of the Hill
- Near the gold nugget in Top of the Hill
- By the rocks in Hillside
- Under the railing in The Enchanted Forest
- Under Pogie the Fluffle in The Enchanted Forest
- Under a railing in Enchanted Treetops
- By some stone blocks in Edge of the Tower
- On the cloud in Fluffy Cloud
- On the rampart in Castle Rampart
- On the stairs in Castle Rampart
- In the bushes in Tower Drawbridge
- Beneath the roof tile in First Landing
- Behind strange mechanism in Inner Sanctum
- By the wall in The Deserted Tower
- Behind the greasy spanner in Double Trouble
- Under a clump of grass in Castle Drawbridge
- Under a clump of grass in The Castle Gardens
- Under a stone block in The Castle Gardens

## TURTLES THE COIN-OP

Ian Taylor says that after choosing a turtle to go to the define keys option and change them to CHEAT, when asked to confirm your choice press N. Then select the controls you want for infinite credits.

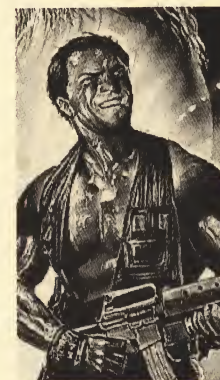


## FIGHTER BOMBER

A. Knevelt of Havant suggests that when you are within 25 miles of any building/target, press H to pause and then hold the keys F,I,G,H,T,E,R. When you let go a white square should appear on your HUD, press fire and you can watch the maverick glide to earth and wipe it out "Targ destroyed" will appear on the screen.

## NARC, GOLDEN AXE &amp; CRACKDOWN

Alan Archer of Keynsham has found a neat way of surviving twice as long on Narc, Golden Axe and Crackdown – select 1 player mode, then, when you are about to die, press the Space bar to activate player 2. Pretty clever, eh?



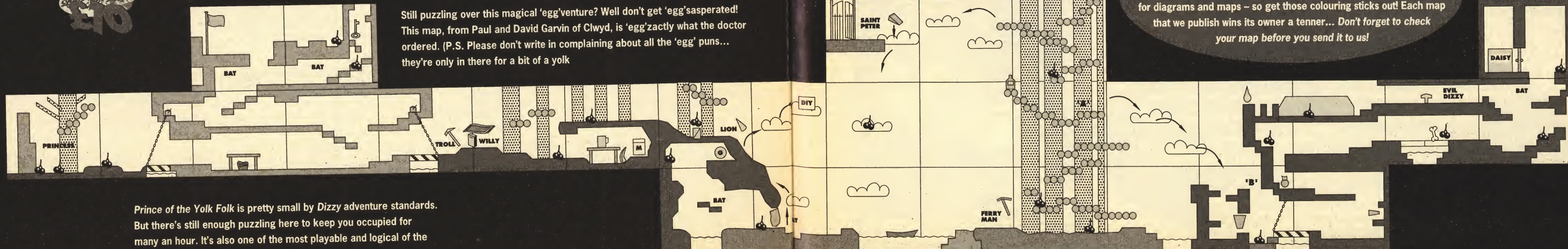
## PAPERBOY 2

Darren K Jarvis, a buddy of mine from up the road in Calverton, Notts, has got together a bunch of tips for Paperboy (girl) 2. Thanks, Darren K. I wondered who it was breaking my windows! ("Don't be mardy, stay on the corsie and mek it g'backards" – People from Nottingham talk like that – except, apparently, Robin Hood!)

- The control is quite fiddly and takes a lot of practice.
- Don't run into houses, people, cars, kerbs, hedges, in fact anything that stands still.
- Get close to the paper box and fire. If you miss, keep firing papers until you get one in. Then, no matter how many of their windows you have broken, they will still subscribe.
- Pick up as many bundles of papers as you can; you will soon run out and cannot go back for more.
- It is better to go slowly until you know where each paper box is in advance.
- On the second level, be careful! The castles fire cannon balls at you and the little chaps who run around carrying things will try to run into you.
- On the third level, the castles fire two lots of cannon balls, and occasionally a purple van will come out of a side road in a deliberate attempt to stop you finishing the round.
- Also, beware of running into prams. you may get extra points for saving the baby, but can lose a life if it isn't done properly.

## Dizzy, Prince of the Yolk Folk

Still puzzling over this magical 'egg'venture? Well don't get 'egg'sasperated! This map, from Paul and David Garvin of Clwyd, is 'egg'actly what the doctor ordered. (P.S. Please don't write in complaining about all the 'egg' puns... they're only in there for a bit of a yolk



Prince of the Yolk Folk is pretty small by Dizzy adventure standards. But there's still enough puzzling here to keep you occupied for many an hour. It's also one of the most playable and logical of the Dizzy adventures...

## We want your maps!

The Cheat Mode section is set to get bigger, folks, with more space for diagrams and maps – so get those colouring sticks out! Each map that we publish wins its owner a tenner... Don't forget to check your map before you send it to us!



**Every month** we put a collection of game pokes on the covertape. These short programs 'modify' the game code when it loads to give you all sorts of extra goodies, like infinite lives, energy and so forth.

Also, where we can we give you equivalent Multiface pokes so that you can get the same effect using one of Romantic Robot's little black boxes...

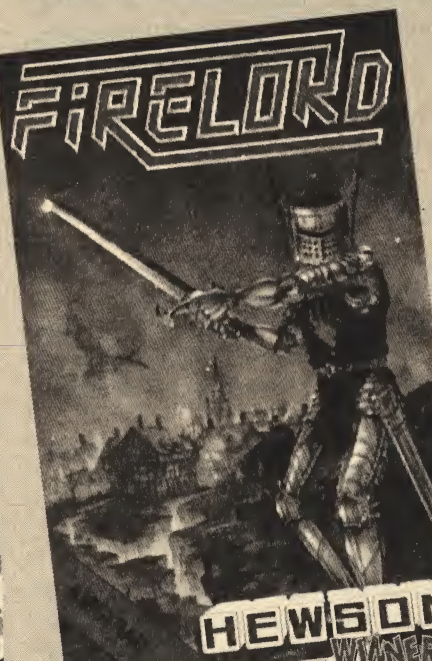
See below for details on this month's covertape pokes, plus instructions on how to use them for first-timers, PLUS some tasty Multiface pokes...

Andy Price (Dunstable's demon disassembler) has bashed together a disk poke for Gremlin's **Switchblade**, which gives your Hiro infinite lives and infinite weapons.

**WINNER!** Graham Smith, the tape gamesters hero, has been busy



with his "Acme patented poke finding machine" and sorted pokes for Road Runner and Wile Coyote that will give you infinite lives and a choice of skill levels. Graham has also produced a poke to slow the timer to half speed on Chevy Chase.



The AA77 tape is cracked by Graham and supplies Seymour Take 1 and Firelord with infinite lives.

**AA79 COVERTAPE  
(RANARAMA & MAZE MANIA)**

**WINNER!**  
**FXO**

The poke for the AA79 cover-tape slows down the energy loss in *Ranarama*, and gives you infinite lives on *Maze Mania*. I did it especially for you....

- 1) Load the poke you want from the covertape into your computer.
- 2) Take out the covertape and put in your game tape or disk.
- 3) Type **!DISC** if you are using a disk poke.
- 4) Type **RUN** to run the routine (not **RUN ""** (**CTRL+ENTER**) as you normally would)





**You should find that the game will load normally, or you will be given instructions on what needs to be done.**



**● You'll find pokes  
for all these games on this  
month's covertape!**



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# the Balrog

Greetings, my most excellent adventurers, and welcome to the most bodacious adventure column in computer-land. So don those shades, read the column and party on, dudes!

## MAGAZINE NEWS...

The Balg has had a few of his favourite magazines drop through the gold letter box this month so I thought I'd give them a mention.

■ First was *Adventure Coder* which is now up to issue 17 and still (just) going. I say just because the editor, Chris Hester, is having problems with lack of contributions. So if you fancy passing on some adventure creating/writing hints and tips then write to Chris to help him out.

Issue 17 includes some amusing stories, letters, a review of a Spectrum adventure disk-based magazine and the first in a series of articles entitled 'How to make a thingy' which, step-by-step, tells you how to write an adventure-creator in Z80 for the Spectrum. Since the Z80 chip is the same processor as on the CPC, it should be of interest to CPC coders.

■ Next through the gold letterbox was *Members Pack 14* from the *Adventurers and Strategy Club* – 42 pages of additional material for the *Reference Book of Adventure*. The Balg's reference book is now very useful – it has over 350 pages of

adventure reviews, letters, hints etc.

The *Reference Book* is a brilliant idea and a great adventure aid but, as usual, there is little CPC content and it is quite expensive. However if you're planning on keeping with adventures for some years or if you have more than one computer it is well worth subscribing to.

This issue's ASC also had enclosed a voting form for the 'Golden Chalice Awards', an annual ceremony similar to the *Adventure Probe* awards. As soon as I get the results I'll print them in these hallowed pages.

■ Next through the post was the latest issue of *Adventure Probe*, which is now in its sixth year. *Adventure Probe* is of its usual high standard and as well as the regular sections there is an article/interview with nearly all of the Infocom game authors (taken from an American bulletin board) and the sad news that Peter Knowles of PK Graphics (the sister company of Guild Adventure Software) might be leaving the adventure scene as all his computers were recently destroyed in a freak accident – hope that everything works out Peter!

■ Finally, the Balg was happy to receive a surprise package from

Matthew Harrodine containing his fanzine AOK. Thanks very much, Matthew! AOK appears to be mostly techie stuff, but two of its 36 pages are dedicated to adventure (written by 'The Equaliser' who has some suspiciously familiar tips!) and is quite good although the print quality is quite poor.

## The details

• Chris Hester, *Adventure Coder*, 3 West Lane, Baildon, Near Shipley, West Yorkshire, BD17 5HD. UK Price £1.25 per issue

• The *Adventure & Strategy Club*, 17 Sheridan Road, London E12 6QT. Tel: (081) 470 8563. Price £24/year, £14/6 months – write for more details.

• Mandy Rodrigues HBalg, *Adventure Probe*, 67 Lloyd Street, Llandudno, Gwynedd LL30 2YP. UK Price £1.50 per issue.

• Matthew Harrodine, Editor, AOK Fanzine, 155 Haslucks Green Road, Shirley, Solihull, West Midlands B90 2LG. UK Price £1/issue.

## WOW ADVENTURE CONVENTION VIDEO

For avid *Adventure Probe* fans who missed the convention or who went to

the convention and want to see it all again, WoW software has put together an hour-long, professionally-edited video of the highlights of the convention.

Notable appearances include Mandy Rodrigues HBalg, Simon Avery, Larry Horsfield, Tony Collins, Joan Pancott HPilg, Lorna Patterson, Debby Howard, Dungeon Master (the columnist from ACU) and the Balg himself! The video costs £12 and is available from the WoW address at the end of the next story...

## WOW NEWS

Talking of Wow, Joan Pancott HPilg, chief of WoW software, has been ill recently (get well soon Joan!) but it hasn't stopped WoW as she now has the rights to all games previously sold by Atlas software (under the guise of Mandy Rodrigues HBalg). This includes both of Bob Adams' games *Grue-Knapped* and *Helvira Mistress of the Park*, plus a couple of others.

As well as gaining the Atlas games, WoW also has two new adventures especially aimed at children – *Big Top*, written by Ronnie Slater,

continued on page 42 ▼

# CLUE-SNIFFING with the Balrog

This month's scintillating collection of clues are from Daniel Pooley, Brendan "Legolas" McGoldrick, Phil Johnson (Northenden), Mayur Maha (Orpington), Chris Godfrey (Basingstoke), Thomas Christie (Grangemouth), Lee Hatton (Northern Ireland) and Robert Melody (Surrey).

## Heroes of Karn (esp. for M C Chisel)

- Get the tinderbox and light the marsh gas.
- Kiss the frog.
- Attack the barrow wight with the bible.
- Bribe the guard with the money.

## Hobbit (esp. for P L Ramsay & M C Chisel)

- To pass the eyes at the forest – wear ring, west, wait twice, west, wait twice, west, north, west to Beorn's house.
- Elrond is used to read the map.
- Wargs can be killed with swords.
- Get caught by the goblins to find the small curious key.
- Open all in Beorn's house.
- To cross the black river, look across river, throw rope across river (repeat until lands in boat), then pull it, climb into boat.

## Kentilla

- To get the graphite, put the diamonds in crucible, put crucible in furnace, turn dial to on, turn dial to off, get crucible, look in crucible, get graphite.

## Knightmare

- From Scullery, go right, up and right until you come to wall monster. Find odd one out and face down, open door, go down, get potion, drink potion in a permanently open exit and leave – you will now have spells.

## Lord of the Rings

- You need the candle – go west from your house until you meet a guard. Wear ring, west, remove ring, get candle and light candle with the matches and you'll be able to see where you're going.

## Lords of Time

- Pull out the tiger's bad tooth, and give it to the tooth fairy. Accept her second offer.
- Take hour glass, look at picture, N, look, get matches and candle, wind and enter clock, turn cog (1 to 9), swing pendulum, open door and go north.

## Not a Penny More, Not a Penny Less

- Ascot: Wait until James calls in that Harvey is heading to parade rings. Enter parade rings, I say professor porter, say chemistry (wait until horse wins) invite Harvey to Oxford.

## Quest for the Golden Egg-cup

- In God's temple there is a rubber duck in the bath and the "under-the-bed-object" under the cardboard cutout of the bed.
- Give the credit card to the man on the raft if he refuses to let you aboard his craft.
- Give bottle to Wongo the witch to get magic wand.

## Rigel's Revenge (for Madryn P-M)

- Once in the minefield go E and SE until you are east of a hut, E (guards appear), say anything, say anything (bomb wakes up), introduce bomb. It talks in Rigellian. Guards steal mine detector and run away.

## Scapeghost - Part 2

- Dig around in herb garden to get card.
- To get body to hall – run to attic, get socket, get in, tie socket to body, get out, get plug, down, examine clock, open panel, put plug in panel, close panel and push clock.

## Simply Magic

- At the start, go to the room of sadness and cry.

- Go to the room of happiness and give handkerchief to clown.
- Give pearl in the room of wisdom.
- Drop key in the room of bewilderment (everything is backwards so you have to drop to get!)

## Spiro Legacy

- To get Bonzo spell – While in the bathroom (of Abbeyville), stand on toilet and look in cistern – you will find a tin which has a computer disc in it. Take the disc along to the estate office and turn on the computer, put the disc in the computer and load program.

## Dun Darach

- Mr D J Gahan (there's a lot of people not using their first names this month!) comes to the aid of a reader in the January issue of AA who was stuck in *Dun Darach* – to get through the locked door in the Alchemist shop you need to be in possession of a Platina from the Assayer, 82 Silver Street – thank you Mr Gahan!

## Shadows of Mordor

- Brendan "Legolas" McGoldrick has the clues needed to solve Jonathon Constable's problem in *Shadows of Mordor* – you simply 'POLE RAFT WITH BRANCH' to get the raft across the swamp.

## Contacting the Balg

To contact the Balg, write to him at: Amstrad Action, Future Publishing Ltd, Beauford Court, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, AVON BA1 2AP or e-mail at [cazsjw@uk.ac.leeds.dcs](mailto:cazsjw@uk.ac.leeds.dcs).

# GAC programming clinic

If you have any questions on the use of GAC, specific GAC-related problems and queries or hints and tips of your own then jot them down and send them to: GAC Programming Clinic, Amstrad Action, Beauford Court, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW

## DEAR BALROG,

I bear great tidings for all adventure fans! Within this missive is held the secret of loading GAC from the covertape – without using the menu program. This, unfortunately, applies only to those of us lucky enough to own disk drives. My handy hint will allow all budding adventure writers to produce a working disc containing nothing but the GAC code, (and all that empty space to be filled by their adventures). The first step is to transfer the tape (Number 10) onto disk by following the instructions in the maga-

zine. Make sure the disk with all the transferred software is in drive A, then type in the following little proggette:

```
la
memory &7fff
load "menu.bin", &8000
poke &8100, &3e
poke &8101, 1
poke &8102, 0
save "gac", b, &8000, &7a5, &80ea
```

NB: Since there are no line numbers, each command is executed immediately RETURN is pressed.

Once you have typed that little lot in, you should find a new file on your disk, "GAC.BIN", 3K in length. This is a modified version of the "MENU.BIN" program.

Now, all you need to do is copy the files:

```
1.BIN
GAC.BIN
QS.ADV
```

across to a new blank disk (using CP/M or your fave disk copier) and you're away!

Alternatively, you can use it on the original disk, but it does not leave as much room free for adventures. You needn't copy QS.ADV across, but it is handy to have around when starting to program a new adventure. 1.BIN, however, is essential as it con-

tains the main GAC program, whereas GAC.BIN is simply the loader.

To start up this new copy of GAC, simply type RUN"GAC" and before you know it, it's running!

By the way, if you change the last number 1 in the

line  
poke  
&8101, 1 to a 2 then  
save, (changing the name to 'Belle'), you get a file that can run the *Southern Belle* game direct.  
Austin Donnelly  
Glasgow

## GAC COMPETITION ENTRY FORMAT

A lot of people have written asking for what they should send with the GAC games they write for the competition. So here they are – the full compo rules!

1. The game must be GACed (it is a GAC competition after all!)
2. It must be one part only (the covertape won't have room for a multi-part game)
3. You can send your game on a tape or disk (although I'd prefer the game on disk), but if you want your game back you must include a stamped self addressed envelope.
4. You must send a solution and map with your entry (I can't be expected to play hundreds of GAC games without any help!).
5. It would help if you sent any relevant instructions.
6. It would also help if you wrote why you feel your game is good – outline any clever puzzles, amusing responses or strong points.
7. Don't forget you can also mark your game as PD if you'd like Debby Howard of Adventure PD to stock the game if you're not the lucky winner.



## HELP

**The Lords and Ladies** of Adventure freely lend their skills to less experienced adventurers out there. Remember, though, that they are doing this for nothing. Please stick to the times specified for 'phone calls, and please keep your requests as short and sweet as possible!

Castle Blackstar • Heavy on the Magick • Mystery of the Indus Valley.  
Andy Clayton, 29 Portman Road, Scunthorpe, South Humberside DN15 8PD. Tel: (0724) 872135 between 6pm and midnight.

Aftershock • Big Sleaze • Colour of Magic • DAA • Dracula • Escape from Khoshima • Espionage Island • Fourth Protocol (Pt. 3) • Frankenstein • Hunchback 1 • Imagination • Mega Bucks • Message from Andromeda • Mordens Quest • Mountains of Ket (Pt. 1) • Return to Eden • Seabase Delta • Shard of Inovar • Souls of Darkon • Star Wreck • Stormbringer • Subunk • Top Secret • Warlord • Werewolf Simulator • Wizbiz • Wolfman.

Dawn Greastrix, 10 Chatsworth Drive, Chadsmoor, Cannock, Staffs WS11 2EW.

Help with GAC Programming.  
Len Townsend, 61 Lowergate Road, Accrington, Lancashire BB5 6LN.

Crispin Crunchy • Gnome Ranger • Message from Andromeda • Scapeghost • Simply Magic • Talisman of Power • Top Secret • Yarkon Blues.  
Jay Honosutomo, 41 Thriftfield, Hemel Hempstead, Herts HP2 5YH. Tel between Mon-Fri, 4.30-9pm (0442) 242957

Adult II • Boredom • Deadenders • Dungeon • Firestone • Gnome Ranger • Hitchhiker's Guide • Ingrid's Back • Jason & the Argonauts • Lancelot • Quest for the Golden Egg-cup • Rigel's Revenge • Scapeghost • Smashed • Tizpan • Venom. Richard Jamieson, 79 Land Street, Rothes, Aberlour, Banffshire AB38 7BB.

Aftershock • Football Frenzy • Gnome Ranger • Kentilla • Knight Tyme • Mega Bucks • Rigel's Revenge • Seabase Delta. Jon Bingham, 10 Cowslip Walk, Amblecote, Brierley Hill, West Midlands DY5 2QN.

Bestiary • Blue Raider • Firestone • Quad X • Wizards Castle.  
Lee Davies, The Flat, 415 Whitehall Road, Bristol B55 7BP.

and *The Last Snowman*, written by Margaret Crewdson (authoress of the *Angelicus* adventures). Both are for ages 9 to 90 and *The Last Snowman* comes personalised with the child's name. Prices are £2 tape, £4 disk.

Joan is also releasing a new PAW game by Steve Clay called *The Taxman Corneth*. Apparently you play the part of a tax inspector and you have to collect money from various people (Ken Dodd and Josef Locke watch out!) Disk-only at £4, Joan asks that you please specify what machine you have so that she can configure the game.

• The address for Wow Software is: Joan Pancott HPilg, WoW Software, 78 Radipole Lane, Weymouth, Dorset DT4 9RS.

## YARKON BLUES II

Jason Davis is at this moment putting the final touches to *Yarkon Blues II*, which will be released by WoW software.

If it's anything like the original, it'll be a good game. And it's a two-parter as well! Price is £3 on tape and £5 for the disk version.

## BALROG'S POSTBAG

Here's where the Balg gnashes open another batch of readers' letters. Got something you want to say, an adventuring query or a useful tip? Write to: Balrog, Amstrad Action, Beauford Court, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW...

## WHERE'S MY BOOKLET?!

After applying for your GAC booklet enclosing a cheque for £2.99. I also wrote another letter to you with no response...

Mr Ward  
Dorset

I sent for a GAC booklet in December but have received nothing - What's going on?!

Brendan "Legolas" McGoldrick  
Strabane

Six weeks have passed since I sent a cheque for £2.99 in respect of the GAC Booklet offer. I have not received any booklet and my cheque has been cashed...

Mr A D Urquhart  
Crowborough

I still have not, over two months later, received the instruction booklet for which I paid...

John Doe  
Worthing

Argh! The demand for the booklets was so great that it was no longer simply a case of photocopying copies to send out - AA had to arrange for hundreds to be specially printed, and that's what took the time. However, it's all been sorted out now - anyone still waiting should call Future Publishing's Somerset office on 0458 74011. Apologies to all who received their booklets late - but don't worry, there's still months before the closing date of the GAC comp!

## GAC COMPO ENTRIES...

Edmund Spicer has already written his entry for the GAC compo and has put it in Data PD for all to look at.

You play Madman Peters who must rescue Princess Maryanne Tooth from the Bald-ro! (Grrr! - Balg) Edmund has also asked that I plug his adventure column in *Artificial Intelligence* (the magazine) and his games, else he'll set his retarded killer fish on me. Consider them ,Edmund!

However, please please please could I ask you readers not to send your entries into the GAC compo yet! You've got months to go before the closing date and its pointless sending your games in early as you might miss some valuable hints and tips from the GAC Clinic!

## NEW ADVENTURE PD LIBRARY

KAT (Kiron's adventure team) PD has recently been set up by Kiron McLellan, who is looking for software to put in his tape-only library. Write to Kiron at: 35 Compton Place, Erith, Kent DA8 112Y for more details.

## ADVENTURE SWAP-SHOP

Simon Avery has just started an adventure swapshop. He writes in his letter, "It's sort of a helpline in which I help adventurers to find games that are not available through the various companies. The idea is that if I can get people to send me a list of adventures they have and no longer want, then I can compile a database. Then, anybody looking for a certain game, or a general list, could contact me and I'll put them in touch with whoever may have that game."

All Simon asks is that you send an SSAE when writing to him so that he can reply. If you want to sell some of your adventures then just send Simon a list of the games they want to sell along with the price for each game (P & P inc.) and his or her address. Any phone number would also be appreciated so that the buyer can check the game is still available.

A great idea, Simon, and I hope it works! For more details write to Simon at: 71 Fore Street, Chudleigh, South Devon TQ13 0HT or phone (0626) 854339.

## YO BALROG MAN!

My friends have lent me a couple of these weird adventure games. The graphics are mega awesome but they won't respond to my totally cool £400 joystick! I tell you man if I don't find a solution to my problem I'll eat my Nikes and burst the air bubble.

The adventures puzzling me are *Heroes of Karn* and the mega wicked *Hobbit*. Get groovin' and give me some tips to get me started or I'll smash all my Public Enemy records!

Love,  
M. C. Chisel

P.S. Get a grip on yourself, find some decent clothes!

Yo MC! Consider those tips printed! (Although I still think you should destroy those public enemy records!) And as to my clothes sense - I always thought bloodstained leather suited me!

## EYE OF THE BEHOLDER ON CPC?

Can you get *Eye of the Beholder* on the Amstrad (a tape version)?

Michael Parkinson  
Southsea

Nope, sorry Michael, *Eye of the Beholder* is a 16-bit game and I very much doubt there will be plans to convert it to the little old CPC.

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Yeah... shame you didn't have it a bit sooner, though - we've been spotted. Um, hi there potential reader person (gulp!)



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Quick Andy, hurry up with that paint! When people see that there are real Turtles in the mag, they'll fall over themselves to buy a copy. What a great idea, eh? And it was mine, not yours but mine. My idea, mine! Hahahahaaa!

## Got a Nintendo? Then get TOTAL! Issue Six is on sale right NOW!



## making a game of it PART TWO

# Graphic detail

**Flaunting designer scruff** and skate punk cool, Pete Ranson reluctantly tidies the ton of design notes, invoices and sketches covering most of his desk into nice neat piles, and places these beside his computer. Photographer Ian Fox jams his tripod between two tables, does something with a light meter, and starts snapping away.

It's month two of our *How a Game is Made* series, and the AA tour bus has landed in Macclesfield, the home of Big Red Software. Big Red, as anyone with nothing better to do than read the title screens of games will know, are the dudes responsible for the development of many of the big Codemasters games; various Dizzy games, all the Seymour games, and so on.

One of the many projects they are working on at the moment is our adopted game, *Seymour in the Wild West*. I asked Pete how it was going and he looked a bit philosophical.

"Usually we get the whole plan of a game in advance, but with this it's just a small trickle of things as they come in," he reveals, struggling to find the items in question on his now cruelly tidy desk. "What we've got at the moment is a typed-up plot for the first act and a sketch of the map for the act, which Paul has done."

The plot, once rediscovered, reveals that *Wild West* sees the controls set firmly for in-joke city. The outset of the game places Seymour outside Codemasters HQ, inside which he will be exchanging goshes with, amongst others, jolly PR dude Richard Eddy, head honcho Dave Darling and receptionist Claire.

"Basically I'd go through this," says Pete, moving his pen down the plot sheet like a maths teacher going through your homework with you, "circling

The second instalment of the *Seymour in the Wild West* story is all about graphics. Once again it's ADAM PETERS spending most of the AA travel budget on train fares...

## The Macclesfield posse



Here are our chums from Big Red • On the left is Pete Ranson, who is 21. He did a lot of work for his brother Paul while at school, working on games like *Strike!* and *Rasterscan* for Binary Design in Manchester. Leaving sixth form college after a year to go to art school, he decided to work for his bro full time (at Big Red) after being unable to get into any polys • Fred Williams, on the right, is 25 and he's got a degree in engineering. He tried to get a 'proper job' but couldn't. So he replied to an ad for a computer games writer, and thus the Pete and Fred partnership was born • Also involved are Terry (who lives in Devon) and the afore mentioned Paul, who now works at Codies HQ in Leamington.

any characters or objects that we'll need sprites for. If we've done any similar games in the past, we can use the graphics from them, in this case *Seymour Hollywood* and *Super Seymour*, as a starting block."

It's not just a case of digging up the old Seymour sprite and chucking that straight into the new game, though. Whilst Dizzy looks the same

throughout his adventures, the intention is for Seymour to don a different 'costume' for every jaunt. Here, as Pete explains, lies one of the first problems to be encountered in doing the graphics for *Wild West*.

"Seymour is going to be wearing a cowboy hat throughout the game, which would normally simply involve adding one to the sprites from the first



■ It's a hard life eh, this game development malarkey? You have to put your feet up on desks and stare into space a lot. Ho ho. Just kidding, hard working Big Red dudes.

game. Unfortunately, the sprites are of limited size, and there isn't room in some to fit on the hat. It may be a case of doing the hat as a separate sprite, like we did with the cloak in *Super Seymour*."

Pete talks with glee about how much he is looking forward to *Wild West*, being a great fan of the whole western genre. "There's going to be all the expected stuff in it; tepees, wagon trains, everything," he says. No doubt he'll be watching plenty of westerns with a checklist by his side, if the embarrassment he says he feels when recalling an object that was missing from *Seymour Hollywood* is anything to go by.



■ Look, it's a CPC. Over there, in the corner. And it's attached to that PC. They're probably, erm, interfacing...

"It wasn't till later," he confesses, "that I realised there weren't any cameras in it anywhere – a game that was supposed to be set in Hollywood with no cameras to be seen! So we did *Seymour Take One* (a mini-game featured on the AA77 covertape) and made sure it had a camera in it!"

Throughout this confession, as indeed throughout the whole interview, partner in design Fred has been silent. He's been sitting in the corner fiddling about with the 16-colour graphics for the CPC version of *Grell & Fella*. He's on his feet now though, gathering his things in preparation for the long commute back to his Birmingham abode. Pete wants to go home too. Time to leave, I guess.

Macclesfield has something of a reputation as the archetypal northern smalltown; grim, grey, grimy, a little narrow-minded, a bit depressing, and possibly a tad too resentful of the outside world. But in amongst all the sullen and the smoke, on a computer screen on the ground floor of a small office block, a new world is starting to take shape.

It's a world full of brightly-coloured wigwams, saloons and three-pointed cactuses. A world where every problem is approached with a smile, and every discovery is met with a "gosh!" It's a big, brash, cute and challenging little devil of a world, and we'll be taking you back there in four weeks time. Don't be late.

## Brave new world



■ A small (small?) selection of sprites from the CPC *Seymour goes to Hollywood*.

Big Red use two different PC packages to produce the graphics for the CPC versions of games. The first, *DPaint*, is an art package which can emulate any screen mode (CPC, Speccy, ST, Amiga, etc). The sprites are touched up and coloured in on this, having been drawn on paper and then scanned in.

Graphics from *DPaint* can then be imported into *Animator*, a dead expensive program which, as you can probably guess from its name, produces the animation. Any character that is expected to move will need lots of different sprites, with feet in different places or whatever. The more different positions there are, the more fluid the animation.

A sprite is positioned, the program moves on one frame, and then the next sprite in sequence is pasted down. It's the same technique used in those flick-book things that cool people draw in the corners of the pages in their maths books. When the frames are advanced in quick sequence, the illusion of fluid walking (or flying, or whatever) results.

The backgrounds are made up of lots of different sprites, specifically positioned when then 'map' is compiled. The leaves of a tree, for instance, is a single sprite placed lots of times in close sequence.



■ Chez Codies. Seymour's fab western adventure begins in, er, Leamington.

## softie spot

# TRAVEL THE OCEAN

Stupidly getting on the wrong train at Macc station, instead of travelling home (Bristol), Adam ends up in Manchester. Making the best of it, he decides to visit Ocean Software while he's there...

As the Happy Mondays get tied up with hospitals and drug clinics, and the Stone Roses try to get their heads together after a lengthy court case, so the pivotal role Manchester held within British music culture a couple of years ago has disappeared. Baggy is yester-

day's genre, with attention now focused instead on the grunge metal-lurgists of West Coast America and the techno boffins of Essex.

That's not to say that Manchester has got boring. Far from it, the Athens/Los Angeles of the north is still

the most happening English city after London. The town is full of record shops (try Picadilly Records in Brown Street and Eastern Bloc in Oldham Street), weird pubs (the Dry Bar in Oldham Street, designed by the same interior designer as the Hacienda club) and so forth.

Probably the grooviest place for shopping is the excellent Afflecks Palace, just off Oldham Street (again - what a road!), which offers four levels of clothing stalls, record stalls, hairdressers and the like. There's a fair bit of designer stuff there, including a branch of Red or Dead shoes - they sell some ace Doc Marten boots.

But bobbins to clothes and



■ Hai-chow. It's our finger-waving, leg-kicking, martial arts chum Ken from Ocean.

records, huh, you want to know about computer software, right? Manchester is home to branches of various computer games stores, including Virgin Games. Probably the best of these

CPC-wise is Game, situated on the first floor of the cavernous Arndale Centre. The shop may have a minimalist name, but it's got a maximalist (huh? - ed) stock of games.

Speaking of games, the biggest software house in Europe have their HQ just behind Manchester Central Library. Let's drop in on their karate chopping games PR person (not project manager) Ken Lockley (not Locksley).

So, Ken, what's the score regarding *Hook*, *Space Gun* and *Robocop 3* - are any of them coming out on the Amstrad or what?

"Hook was never pencilled in as being on the Amstrad, but *Space Gun* definitely will be and it should be fin-

ished quite soon..."

Good-oh, but what about *Robocop 3* on cartridge?

"That's not going to be on cartridge any more, due to some problems encountered, but it will be on disk for the 6128+."

Are these problems the same as the difficulties encountered with *Toki*, ie the 128K total memory limit on the chip wasn't enough?

"I don't know."

Like most of the big softies, Ocean are rumoured to be pulling out of the 8-bit market. Apart from *The Addams Family*, *Space Gun* and *Robocop 3*, have you got any other Amstrad releases planned?



■ Here's Manchester. Not all of it you understand, just a small little bit of it.

"Not at the moment, though we still plan to produce Amstrad versions of very big licences. Expect something around Christmas time.

"We've also got a really active bud-



■ Yo, it's the Ocean playtester dudes. Hey playtesters - woo, over here! Tsch. Boring gets.

get re-release label, of course. *Hit Squad* is still doing really well. If anything it's getting bigger, and we will be re-releasing a lot more Amstrad games on that in the future."



[illegible]

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# type-ins

AA's BASIC expert JERRY GLENWRIGHT introduces three great programs to type in, plus his regular BASIC tutorial. If you've written a program you think is good, send it to: Type-Ins, Amstrad Action, Beauford Court, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW

## HEY JUDE



Here's 5K of compact code that's going all the way to the top! Paul Roberts of Warwick has crammed drums, bass and melody lines into three sound channels to produce a cracking rendition of the Moptops' Sixties swinger Hey Jude. The junior tunesmith has coupled accurate melody representation with clever use of the noise facilities and engineered a really listenable three minutes' worth.

A well-earned platinum (3-inch) disk and twenty quid is winging its way to you as I write...

```
{FpBk} 10-REM-HEY-JUDE-by-Paul-Roberts-(age-9)
{NnBj} 20-REM-for-Amstrad-Action-March-1992.
{H1Au} 30-REM-*****INITIALISE*****
{BtBk} 40-MODE-1:INK-0:INK-1,24:INK-2,18
{NqBi} 50-INK-3,6:BORDER-1:PAPER-0:PEN-2
{PvBj} 60-ENV-1,8,-1,4:ch=0:tp=0:du=0:vl=0
{Mudj} 70-PRINT-STRING$(40,"*");:PEN-1:PRINT-""
***HEY-JUDE-by-Paul-Roberts-(age-9)***;:
PEN-3:PRINT-STRING$(40,"*");
{GtBj} 80-INK-3,6:BORDER-1:PAPER-0:PEN-2
{LnAu} 90-GOSUB-560:EVERY-30-GOSUB-560
{HoBn} 100-READ-ch,tp,du,vl:IF-ch=-
1-THEN-GOTO-580
{PkAw} 110-SOUND-ch,tp,du,vl:GOTO-100
{EpAx} 120-REM-*****MUSIC-DATA*****
{OvBo} 130-DATA-3,0,150,0,1,179,30,9,1,119,30,1
0
{JnBt} 140-DATA-1,106,30,11,1,100,58,12,1,0,2,0
```

```
,1,100,60,12
{CwBn} 150-DATA-1,95,30,12,1,89,30,12,1,80,58,1
2
{GqBt} 160-DATA-1,0,2,0,1,80,60,12,1,0,60,0,1,1
59,30,12
{LuBu} 170-DATA-1,142,30,12,1,134,58,12,1,0,2,0
,1,134,120,12
{GiAx} 180-DATA-1,0,60,0,1,119,60,10
{CkCm} 190-DATA-1,142,120,10,1,0,30,0,1,142,30,
10,1,119,30,10,1,106,30,10,2,358,240,10
{BxCj} 200-DATA-1,159,120,10,1,0,60,0,1,159,30,
10,1,142,30,10,2,478,240,10
{EwCu} 210-DATA-1,134,60,10,1,89,60,10,1,0,30,0
,1,89,30,10,2,536,240,10,1,95,30,10,1,119,
30,10
{LwCr} 220-DATA-1,106,30,10,1,119,15,10,1,134,1
5,10,2,358,240,10,1,142,120,10,1,0,30,0,1,
119,30,10
{LxEp} 230-DATA-1,106,28,10,2,536,120,10,1,0,2,
0,1,106,58,10,1,0,2,0,1,106,30,10,1,80,30,
10,1,89,30,10,2,536,120,10,1,95,15,10,1,89
,15,10,1,106,30,10,1,119,60,10,1,0,60,0,1,
179,30,10,2,358,240,10,1,159,30,10,1,142,3
0,10,1,106,30,10
{JlCt} 240-DATA-1,119,60,10,1,0,60,0,1,179,30,1
0,2,358,240,10,1,159,30,10,1,142,30,10,1,1
06,30,10
{KwCu} 250-DATA-1,106,30,10,1,119,58,10,1,0,2,0
,1,119,30,10,2,478,240,10,1,134,60,10,1,14
2,60,10
{CrCp} 260-DATA-1,130,30,10,1,179,90,10,1,0,60,
0,2,358,238,10,1,119,60,10,2,0,2,0
{PjEk} 270-DATA-1,142,120,10,1,0,30,0,1,142,30,
10,1,119,30,10,1,106,30,10,2,358,240,10,1,
159,120,10,1,0,60,0,1,159,30,10,1,142,30,1
0,2,478,240,10
```

```
159,120,10,1,0,60,0,1,159,30,10,1,142,30,1
0,2,478,240,10
{ApFk} 280-DATA-1,134,60,10,1,89,60,10,1,0,30,0
,1,89,30,10,2,536,240,10,1,95,30,10,1,119,
30,10,1,106,30,10,1,119,15,10,1,134,15,10,
2,358,240,10,1,142,120,10,1,0,30,0,1,119,3
0,10
{OmGx} 290-DATA-1,106,28,10,2,536,120,10,1,0,2,
0,1,106,58,10,1,0,2,0,1,106,30,10,1,80,30,
10,1,89,30,10,2,536,120,10,1,95,15,10,1,89
,15,10,1,106,30,10,1,119,60,10,1,0,60,0,1,
179,30,10,2,358,240,10,1,159,30,10,1,142,3
0,10,1,106,30,10
{ExEi} 300-DATA-1,106,30,10,1,119,58,10,1,0,2,0
,1,119,30,10,2,478,240,10,1,134,60,10,1,14
2,60,10,1,130,30,10,1,179,210,10,2,358,240
,10
{Cidv} 310-DATA-1,0,30,0,1,179,30,7,1,89,30,7,2
,0,120,0,1,100,30,7,1,106,30,7,1,119,28,7,
1,0,2,0,2,0,120,0,1,119,30,7,1,134,30,7
{IjCi} 320-DATA-1,106,60,7,1,89,30,7,1,106,90,7
,2,536,240,7,1,89,60,7
{DlCq} 330-DATA-1,134,60,7,1,89,30,7,1,106,60,7
,1,119,30,7,2,638,240,7,1,134,60,7
{HvBw} 340-DATA-1,119,90,7,1,106,30,7,1,119,60,
7,2,478,240,7,1,134,60,7
{KnBo} 350-DATA-1,142,30,7,1,159,30,7,1,179,180
,7,2,358,240,7
{DqEk} 360-DATA-1,0,30,0,1,179,30,7,1,89,30,7,2
,0,120,0,1,106,28,7,1,0,2,0,1,106,30,7,1,1
19,28,7,1,0,2,0,2,0,120,0,1,119,30,7,1,134
,30,7
```

```
{EnCi} 370-DATA-1,106,60,7,1,89,30,7,1,106,90,7
,2,536,240,7,1,89,60,7
{PpCp} 380-DATA-1,134,60,7,1,89,30,7,1,106,60,7
,1,119,30,7,2,638,240,7,1,134,60,7
{EjBx} 390-DATA-1,119,90,7,1,106,30,7,1,119,60,
7,2,478,240,7,1,134,60,7
{HrDx} 400-DATA-1,142,30,7,1,159,30,7,1,179,60,
7,1,0,30,0,2,358,150,7,1,179,30,9,2,358,30
,9,1,119,30,10,2,358,30,10,1,106,30,11,2,3
58,30,11
{FjDq} 410-DATA-1,100,58,12,1,0,2,0,1,100,60,12
,2,402,120,12,1,95,30,12,1,89,30,12,2,478,
120,12,1,80,58,12
{BICx} 420-DATA-1,0,2,0,1,80,60,12,1,0,60,0,1,1
59,30,12,2,478,240,12,1,142,30,12,1,134,58
,12
{MtrC} 430-DATA-1,0,2,0,1,134,120,12,1,0,60,0,2
,478,120,12,2,0,60,0,1,106,60,10
{JKEI} 440-DATA-1,142,120,10,1,0,30,0,1,142,30,
10,1,119,30,10,1,106,30,10,2,358,240,10,1,
159,120,10,1,0,60,0,1,159,30,10,1,142,30,1
0,2,478,240,10
{AsFI} 450-DATA-1,134,60,10,1,89,60,10,1,0,30,0
,1,89,30,10,2,536,240,10,1,95,30,10,1,119,
30,10,1,106,30,10,1,119,15,10,1,134,15,10,
2,358,240,10,1,142,120,10,1,0,30,0,1,119,3
0,10
{ErHi} 460-DATA-1,106,28,10,2,536,120,10,1,0,2,
0,1,106,58,10,1,0,2,0,1,106,30,10,1,80,30,
10,1,89,30,10,2,536,120,10,1,95,15,10,1,89
,15,10,1,106,30,10,1,119,60,10,1,0,60,0,1,
179,30,10,2,358,240,10,1,159,30,10,1,142,3
0,10,1,106,30,10
{DsCv} 470-DATA-1,106,30,10,1,119,58,10,1,0,2,0
,1,119,30,10,2,478,240,10,1,134,60,10,1,14
2,60,10
{Ntdt} 480-DATA-1,190,30,10,1,179,30,10,1,150,3
0,10,1,142,30,10,2,358,120,10,1,127,30,11,
1,119,30,11,1,95,30,11,1,89,30,11,2,358,12
0,11
{PoCv} 490-DATA-1,75,30,12,1,71,30,12,1,63,30,1
2,2,358,240,12,1,60,30,12,1,45,60,12,1,0,6
0,0
{KsCn} 500-DATA-1,179,120,5,2,358,120,5,1,142,6
0,8,2,358,60,8,1,119,60,10,2,358,60,10
{BtCo} 510-DATA-1,80,15,10,1,89,15,10,1,80,30,1
0,2,402,240,10,1,89,120,10,1,0,60,0
{Eids} 520-DATA-1,80,15,10,1,89,15,10,1,80,30,1
0,2,536,180,10,1,89,60,10,1,0,60,0,1,100,3
0,12,2,536,60,12,1,106,30,12
```

```
{OqDs} 530-DATA-1,119,180,12,2,358,240,12,1,0,6
0,0,1,179,120,5,2,358,120,5,1,142,60,8,2,3
58,60,8,1,119,60,10,2,358,60,10
{LsFw} 540-DATA-1,80,15,10,1,89,15,10,1,80,30,1
0,2,402,240,10,1,89,120,10,1,0,60,0,1,80,1
5,10,1,89,15,10,1,80,30,10,2,536,180,10,1,
89,60,10,1,0,60,0,1,100,30,12,2,536,60,12,
1,106,30,12
{BsBI} 550-DATA-1,119,200,12,2,358,200,12,-
1,0,0,0
{DnCi} 560-IF-flag=0-THEN-SOUND-4,0,20,10,1,,31
:flag=1-ELSE-SOUND-4,0,20,10,1,,1:flag=0
{ApAn} 570-RETURN
{BnAs} 580-FOR-vl=10-TO-0-STEP--2
{GrAs} 590-SOUND-1,119,10,vl
{EsAs} 600-SOUND-2,358,10,vl
{PoAo} 610-NEXT-PEN-1
```

## PUZZLE



Come Christmas, there's always one of those annoying little plastic puzzles at the bottom of my stocking along with the de rigueur apple and orange. You know the ones, black plastic, a couple of inches square with sliding number or letter tiles on one side. The object being to shove 'em around until something meaningful turns up. Usually, of course, you get utterly fed after a few tries, bin it and go back to eating Terry's chocolate orange.

Puzzle is an electronic rendition of same. Thomas Lovell of Peterborough decided that the seasonal dose at Christmas wasn't enough and decided to code a version which you can play all year round. Oh well, some programmers just love to punish...

```
{EsAt} 20-REM-By-Thomas-Lovell
{GmAk} 30-REM
{OvBI} 40-INK-0:0:BORDER-0:INK-1,18:INK-2,6:INK
-3,2
{TiAn} 50-REM-Symbols
{JtAt} 60-SYMBOL-240,0,0,0,0,0,0,0
{JxBj} 70-SYMBOL-241,0,127,119,119,119,119,119,
127
{ToBj} 80-SYMBOL-242,0,127,99,123,99,111,99,127
{PoBi} 90-SYMBOL-243,0,127,99,123,99,123,99,127
{CjBI} 100-SYMBOL-244,0,127,107,107,99,123,123,
127
```

```
{DuBk} 110-SYMBOL-245,0,127,99,111,99,123,99,12
7
{GwBI} 120-SYMBOL-246,0,127,111,111,99,107,99,1
27
{OsAx} 130-SYMBOL-247,0,127,99,123,123,123,123,
127
{AtAx} 140-SYMBOL-248,0,127,99,107,99,107,99,12
7
{EtBi} 150-SYMBOL-249,0,127,99,107,99,123,123,1
27
{GsBI} 160-SYMBOL-250,0,127,81,85,85,85,81,127
{PIBI} 170-SYMBOL-251,0,127,107,107,107,107,107
,127
{BkBM} 180-SYMBOL-252,0,127,81,93,81,87,81,127
{BqBI} 190-SYMBOL-253,0,127,81,93,81,93,81,127
{CtBI} 200-SYMBOL-254,0,127,85,85,81,93,93,127
{KoBI} 210-SYMBOL-255,0,127,81,87,81,93,81,127
{LoAw} 220-MODE-1:DIM-chk(15),b(5,5)
{BkAp} 230-REM-Screen
{HrAp} 240-a$="PUZZLE":p=1
{AiAv} 250-LOCATE-18,1:FOR-k=1-TO-6
{OIau} 260-PEN-p:PRINT-MID$(a$,k,1);
{AvAw} 270-p=p+1:IF-p=4-THEN-p=1
{DpAk} 280-NEXT
{MiBk} 290-LOCATE-13,3:PRINT"BY-THOMAS-LOVELL"
{PqAu} 300-a=0:FOR-i=1-TO-4:FOR-k=1-TO-4
{FiBo} 310-c=INT(RND*16):IF-chk(c)=1-THEN-GOTO-
310
{NqCn} 320-b(k,i)=c:chk(c)=1:LOCATE-4+k,9+i:PEN
-1:SOUND-1,c*40,2:PRINT-CHR$(240+c)
{JwBn} 330-LOCATE-32+k,9+i:a=a+1:IF-a=16-THEN-a
=0
{PwBo} 340-SOUND-2,a*40,2:PRINT-CHR$(240+a):NEX
T-NEXT
{DrBw} 350-PEN-2:LOCATE-19,11:PRINT-CHR$(130)CH
R$(131)CHR$(131)CHR$(129)
{NoBv} 360-LOCATE-19,12:PRINT-CHR$(130)CHR$(131
)CHR$(131)CHR$(129)
{OIbw} 370-MOVE-62,188:DRAW-68,0,3:DRAW-0,68:
DRAW-68,0:DRAW-0,-68
{KwBw} 380-MOVE-518,188:DRAW-68,0,3:DRAW-0,68
:DRAW-68,0:DRAW-0,-68
{FpBp} 390-LOCATE-13,20:PEN-1:PRINT"USE-JOYSTICK
K-OR"
{AwBw} 400-LOCATE-5,22:PEN-3:PRINT"USE-CURSOR-K
EYS-TO-CHOOSE-SQUARE"
{IqBs} 410-LOCATE-8,24:PEN-2:PRINT"AND-PRESS-SP
ACE-TO-MOVE-IT"
```

## BASIC tutorial... BASIC tutorial... BASIC tutorial... BASIC tutorial...

Boy, were we cooking with gas last month. Variables, formatting delimiters, INPUT statements – the works! And I'm sure you'll agree, especially if you've messed around with that 'butter' code, that a fragment of explanation and a bit of doodling is all you need to understand a BASIC program. They're positively designed to be understood – as we'll see in later lessons. For now though, let's continue with our ten basic (...and BASIC) keywords.

Here's a thing. Like values, strings can be assigned to variables. That is, you can assign and use string variables as well as normal number-based variables.

To denote a string variable, BASIC uses the \$ symbol. Here are some examples

```
A$
NAME$
BUTTER$
HISCORE$
```

...and so on. The dollar symbol is saying "the preceding letter or word represents a string, and the string can be assigned and changed just like any other variable".

Assign strings to string variables just like you'd assign number variables. So

```
A$="XYZ"
NAME$="Troy Tempest"
BUTTER$="Devon Creamies"
HISCORE$="Baz!"
```

The string to be assigned is contained within inverted commas, and don't forget to add the \$ symbol to the end of the string variable name (otherwise BASIC will assume you're trying to assign a string to a number variable and will get upset!).

Here's a thing. You can actually assign numbers, as strings, to string variables thus

```
NUMBER$="150"
```

but you won't be able to perform mathematical operations on the number in a string (at least, not without using some weird and wonderful functions to convert the string back to the original number). You can, however, manipulate it just like any other text-based string – even though it's a number!

Why use string variables? Because just like when using numbers, it's never a good idea to hard wire anything into your code. If you do, it will almost certainly need to be rewritten to take account of unforeseen changes.

Now. What can be done with string variables? Well, you can add them together (known as 'concatenation'), count how many characters are contained within them, chop them into pieces, and generally manipulate them to your heart's content in order to provide useful processing. Adventure programs for example, use a lot of string manipulation to create believable environments, and sensible command parsing ('parsing' in this context means 'understanding the

meaning of) from their stock of locations descriptions and your typed instructions.

Many of these operations are rather advanced, and will be covered later in the tutorial, but to whet your appetite, let's look at concatenating strings and measuring their length. Consider this:

```
NAME$="Troy " + "Tempest"
```

Enter the above into your CPC, then type

```
PRINT NAME$
```

...and press Return. You'll see

```
Troy Tempest
```

printed on the screen. The two strings "Troy " and "Tempest" have been added



```

{NuAp} 420-REM-Main-Loop
{CrAt} 430-x=1:y=1:xx=x:yy=y
{PpBq} 440-LOCATE-xx+4,yy+9:PRINT-CHR$(b(x
x,yy)+240)
{JIDj} 450-LOCATE-x+4,y+9:PRINT-CHR$(b(x,y
)+240):IF b(x,y)=0 THEN LOCATE-x+4,y+9:PRIN
T-CHR$(143)
{LrAm} 460-xx=x:yy=y
{NoBx} 470-IF (INKEY(8)=0 OR INKEY(74)=0) AND x<
1 THEN x=x-1:SOUND-1,20,5
{BrCi} 480-IF (INKEY(1)=0 OR INKEY(75)=0) AND x<
4 THEN x=x+1:SOUND-1,20,5
{PuCi} 490-IF (INKEY(0)=0 OR INKEY(72)=0) AND y<
1 THEN y=y-1:SOUND-1,20,5
{OrBx} 500-IF (INKEY(2)=0 OR INKEY(73)=0) AND y<
4 THEN y=y+1:SOUND-1,20,5
{PjBp} 510-IF INKEY(47)=0 OR INKEY(76)=0 THEN GO
SUB-610
{PsBj} 520-IF b(4,4)<0 THEN GOTO-440
{EnGw} 530-IF b(1,1)=1 AND b(2,1)=2 AND b(3,1)=3
AND b(4,1)=4 AND b(1,2)=5 AND b(2,2)=6 AND
b(3,2)=7 AND b(4,2)=8 AND b(1,3)=9 AND b(2
,3)=10 AND b(3,3)=11 AND b(4,3)=12 AND b(1
,4)=13 AND b(2,4)=14 AND b(3,4)=15 THEN GOTO
-560
{HlAm} 540-GOTO-440
{HoAg} 550-REM-Completed
{NpAv} 560-LOCATE-xx+4,yy+9:PRINT-"";
{FxAw} 570-FOR k=5 TO 1 STEP -1:FOR i=0 TO 7
{CqCn} 580-PEN-i:LOCATE-16,6:PRINT"HELL-DONE":SO
UND-1,(i*40)+40,2:SOUND-1,k*50,10
{HKCw} 590-FOR z=1 TO 50*k:NEXT:NEXT:NEXT:LOCATE
-15,8:PEN-1:PRINT"PRESS-A-KEY":CLEAR-INPUT:
CALL-@BB18:RUN
{LsAo} 600-REM-Move-Square
{DpBn} 610-IF b(x,y)=0 THEN SOUND-1,90:RETURN
{PuDw} 620-IF x<4 AND b(x+1,y)=0 THEN b(x+1,y)=b
(x,y):b(x,y)=0:LOCATE-x+5,y+9:PEN-1:PRINT-C
HR$(b(x+1,y)+240):SOUND-1,500:RETURN
{BtDx} 630-IF x<1 AND b(x-1,y)=0 THEN b(x-
1,y)=b(x,y):b(x,y)=0:LOCATE-x+3,y+9:PEN-1:P
RINT-CHR$(b(x-1,y)+240):SOUND-1,400:RETURN
{Andx} 640-IF y<4 AND b(x,y+1)=0 THEN b(x,y+1)=b
(x,y):b(x,y)=0:LOCATE-x+4,y+10:PEN-1:PRINT-
CHR$(b(x,y+1)+240):SOUND-1,300:RETURN
{KvDu} 650-IF y>1 AND b(x,y-1)=0 THEN b(x,y-
1)=b(x,y):b(x,y)=0:LOCATE-x+4,y+8:PEN-1:PRI
NT-CHR$(b(x,y-1)+240):SOUND-1,200:RETURN
{HnAt} 660-SOUND-1,90:RETURN

```

## GRADISK



Usually only to be had from commercial sources, utilities such as Gradisk go a long way towards increasing your understanding of the way the CPC stores information on floppy disks. Gradisk provides a graphic track and sector display of any disk, including data disks, even system disks! You can discover exactly how data is organised on a disk, check for bad sectors and generally explore the inner workings of floppies. The program was written by R M Friend of Forest Hill, London.

```

{GkBl} 1000-REM-DATA/SYSTEM/IBM-DISC-Graphic-Lay
out
{CvBj} 1010-INK-0,13:INK-1,0:PAPER-0:BORDER-10
{HqAs} 1020-DIM-PTTrack$(10)
{JqBr} 1030-MODE-2:INPUT"Type:Data, System, IBM, (
1)-(2)-(3)-",DType
{GwAu} 1040-CLS:SYMBOL-AFTER-240
{KiAw} 1050-RESTORE-1310:FOR n=241 TO 252
{JqB1} 1060-READ-Ch1,Ch2,Ch3,Ch4,Ch5,Ch6,Ch7,Ch8
{IqBo} 1070-SYMBOL-n,Ch1,Ch2,Ch3,Ch4,Ch5,Ch6,Ch7
,Ch8:NEXT
{HiBi} 1080-IF DType=1 THEN RESTORE-1400
{OtBk} 1090-IF DType=2 THEN RESTORE-1630
{CoBk} 1100-IF DType=3 THEN RESTORE-1860
{MnCu} 1110-Track$="" : READ-DType$:FOR Loop=1 TO 20
:READ-Ch:Track$=Track$+CHR$(Ch):NEXT:READ-Track$
{HjEw} 1120-LOCATE-2,1:PRINT-DType$:LOCATE-8,1:P
RINT"-DISC:SECTORS:";CHR$(250);CHR$(249);"
-SYS:";CHR$(251);CHR$(252);"-DIR:";CHR$(245
);CHR$(246);CHR$(247);CHR$(248);
{LrCp} 1130-PRINT"-DATA:..TRACK":LOCATE-59,1:P
RINT-Track$:LOCATE-59,2:PRINT-Track$
{OwAn} 1140-LOCATE-50,2:PRINT"SECTORS"
{IvCn} 1150-Track1$="" : FOR Loop=1 TO 19:READ-Ch:
Track1$=Track1$+CHR$(Ch):NEXT
{PjCk} 1160-FOR Loop=1 TO 2:Track1$=Track1$+trac
k1$:NEXT:LOCATE-2,3:PRINT-Track1$
{ItCk} 1170-Temp1$="" : FOR Loop=1 TO 19:READ-Ch:T
emp1$=Temp1$+CHR$(Ch):NEXT
{EvCk} 1180-Temp2$="" : FOR Loop=1 TO 19:READ-Ch:T
emp2$=Temp2$+CHR$(Ch):NEXT
{AxCk} 1190-Temp3$="" : FOR Loop=1 TO 19:READ-Ch:T
emp3$=Temp3$+CHR$(Ch):NEXT
{AnCl} 1200-Temp4$="" : FOR Loop=1 TO 19:READ-Ch:T
emp4$=Temp4$+CHR$(Ch):NEXT

```

```

{FrCn} 1210-Temp5$="" : FOR Loop=1 TO 19:READ-Ch:T
emp5$=Temp5$+CHR$(Ch):NEXT
{PuBn} 1220-DTrack$(1)=Temp1$+Temp2$+Temp3$+Temp
4$
{FuBk} 1230-DTrack$(2)=Temp5$+Temp4$+Temp5$+Temp
4$
{FsBn} 1240-FOR n=3 TO 10:DTrack$(n)=DTrack$(2):
NEXT
{PpDp} 1250-Track=3:Inc=1:FOR n=4 TO 23 STEP 2:L
OCATE-2,n:PRINT-DTrack$(Inc):LOCATE-77,n:PR
INT-Track:Track=Track+4
{DtBu} 1260-READ-Temp1$:LOCATE-2,n+1:PRINT-Temp1
$:Inc=Inc+1:NEXT
{GpAp} 1270-READ-Sect$
{FnDj} 1280-LOCATE-10,25:PRINT"TRACKS-are-Numbe
red-0-to-39-&-each-has-";Sect$;"-SECTORS-Num
bered-1-to-";Sect$
{PtAv} 1290-WHILE INKEY$="" : WEND:END
{FiBm} 1300-REM-****User-Character-data-****
{DsBo} 1310-DATA-0,0,15,31,24,24,24,0,0,0,255,25
5,0,0,0,0
{OvBo} 1320-DATA-0,0,240,248,24,24,24,0,0,0,255,
255,24,24,24,0
{MxBo} 1330-DATA-63,32,47,47,47,32,63,0,254,2,25
0,250,2,254,0,0
{GxBt} 1340-DATA-127,64,95,95,64,127,0,0,252,4,2
44,244,244,4,252,0
{EkCj} 1350-DATA-0,254,254,254,254,254,254,0,0,1
27,127,127,127,127,0
{BrBo} 1360-DATA-0,63,127,255,255,127,63,0,0,252
,254,255,255,254,252,0
{ArAl} 1370-REM
{DqBo} 1380-REM-*****DATA-DISC
DATA-*****
{JpAl} 1390-REM
{HlAp} 1400-DATA-"DATA"
{BxDj} 1410-DATA-241,242,244,242,244,242,244,242
,244,242,244,242,244,242,243,32,32,
32
{HsAt} 1420-DATA-"1.2.3.4.5.6.7.8.9"
{LwCu} 1430-DATA-241,242,244,242,244,242,244,242
,244,242,244,242,244,242,243,32,32
{HrCp} 1440-DATA-251,252,251,252,251,252,251,252
,245,246,247,248,245,246,247,248,245,246,32
{AsCq} 1450-DATA-247,248,245,246,247,248,245,246
,247,248,245,246,247,248,245,246,247,248,32
{BpCp} 1460-DATA-245,246,247,248,245,246,247,248
,245,246,247,248,245,246,247,248,245,246,32

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```

{LuCp} 1470-DATA-247,248,245,246,247,248,245,24
6,247,248,245,246,247,248,245,246,247,248,
32
{MrCp} 1480-DATA-245,246,247,248,245,246,247,24
8,245,246,247,248,245,246,247,248,245,246,
32
{IjBt} 1490-DATA-".....02..03..04..05..06..
07..08..09..0A..0B..0C..0D..0E..0F..10..
11"
{HrCi} 1500-DATA-"..12..13..14..15..16..17..18..
19..1A..1B..1C..1D..1E..1F..20..21..22..
23"
{JiCj} 1510-DATA-"..24..25..26..27..28..29..2A..
2B..2C..2D..2E..2F..30..31..32..33..34..
35"
{BuCn} 1520-DATA-"..36..37..38..39..3A..3B..3C..
3D..3E..3F..40..41..42..43..44..45..46..
47"
{OxCq} 1530-DATA-"..48..49..4A..4B..4C..4D..4E..
4F..50..51..52..53..54..55..56..57..58..
59"
{NkCn} 1540-DATA-"..5A..5B..5C..5D..5E..5F..60..
61..62..63..64..65..66..67..68..69..6A..
6B"
{JjBq} 1550-DATA-"..6C..6D..6E..6F..70..71..72..
73..74..75..76..77..78..79..7A..7B..7C..
7D"
{DxBt} 1560-DATA-"..7E..7F..80..81..82..83..84..
85..86..87..88..89..8A..8B..8C..8D..8E..
8F"
{EsCj} 1570-DATA-"..90..91..92..93..94..95..96..
97..98..99..9A..9B..9C..9D..9E..9F..A0..
A1"
{AjCk} 1580-DATA-"..A2..A3..A4..A5..A6..A7..A8..
A9..AA..AB..AC..AD..AE..AF..B0..B1..B2..
B3"
{OvAm} 1590-DATA-"9"
{MwAk} 1600-REM
{CqBr} 1610-REM-*****SYSTEM-DISC-D
ATA-*****
{MqAk} 1620-REM
{DvAs} 1630-DATA-"SYSTEM"
{FwDj} 1640-DATA-241,242,244,242,244,242,244,24
2,244,242,244,242,244,242,243,32,3
2,32
{KtAt} 1650-DATA-"1.2.3.4.5.6.7.8.9.."
{EnCx} 1660-DATA-241,242,244,242,244,242,244,24
2,244,242,244,242,244,242,243,32,3
2

```

```

{NnCn} 1670-DATA-250,249,250,249,250,249,250,24
9,250,249,250,249,250,249,250,249,250,249,
32
{NkCn} 1680-DATA-250,249,250,249,250,249,250,24
9,250,249,250,249,250,249,250,249,250,249,
32
{PuCo} 1690-DATA-251,252,251,252,251,252,251,25
2,245,246,247,248,245,246,247,248,245,246,
32
{IiCq} 1700-DATA-247,248,245,246,247,248,245,24
6,247,248,245,246,247,248,245,246,247,248,
32
{EoCp} 1710-DATA-245,246,247,248,245,246,247,24
8,245,246,247,248,245,246,247,248,245,246,
32
{MwBn} 1720-DATA-".....02..03..04..05..06..07..
08"
{FvBx} 1730-DATA-"..09..0A..0B..0C..0D..0E..0F..
10..11..12..13..14..15..16..17..18..19..
1A"
{HnCj} 1740-DATA-"..1B..1C..1D..1E..1F..20..21..
22..23..24..25..26..27..28..29..2A..2B..
2C"
{GsC1} 1750-DATA-"..2D..2E..2F..30..31..32..33..
34..35..36..37..38..39..3A..3B..3C..3D..
3E"
{LrCo} 1760-DATA-"..3F..40..41..42..43..44..45..
46..47..48..49..4A..4B..4C..4D..4E..4F..
50"
{IuCq} 1770-DATA-"..51..52..53..54..55..56..57..
58..59..5A..5B..5C..5D..5E..5F..60..61..
62"
{JnCn} 1780-DATA-"..63..64..65..66..67..68..69..
6A..6B..6C..6D..6E..6F..70..71..72..73..
74"
{DlBp} 1790-DATA-"..75..76..77..78..79..7A..7B..
7C..7D..7E..7F..80..81..82..83..84..85..
86"
{DjBx} 1800-DATA-"..87..88..89..8A..8B..8C..8D..
8E..8F..90..91..92..93..94..95..96..97..
98"
{EuCi} 1810-DATA-"..99..9A..9B..9C..9D..9E..9F..
A0..A1..A2..A3..A4..A5..A6..A7..A8..A9..
AA"
{CkAn} 1820-DATA-"9"
{FnAl} 1830-REM
{NkBo} 1840-REM-*****IBM-DISC
DATA-*****

```

```

{JpAl} 1850-REM
{CpAq} 1860-DATA-"IBM"
{FjDi} 1870-DATA-241,242,244,242,244,242,244,24
2,244,242,244,242,244,242,243,32,32,32,32,
32
{DvAu} 1880-DATA-"1.2.3.4.5.6.7.8"
{CiCx} 1890-DATA-241,242,244,242,244,242,244,24
2,244,242,244,242,244,242,243,32,32,32,32
{NoCl} 1900-DATA-250,249,250,249,250,249,250,24
9,250,249,250,249,250,249,250,249,250,249,
32
{LjCp} 1910-DATA-251,252,251,252,251,252,251,25
2,245,246,247,248,245,246,247,248,32,32,32
{HiCp} 1920-DATA-245,246,247,248,245,246,247,24
8,245,246,247,248,245,246,247,248,32,32,32
{C1Cq} 1930-DATA-245,246,247,248,245,246,247,24
8,245,246,247,248,245,246,247,248,32,32,32
{NoCo} 1940-DATA-245,246,247,248,245,246,247,24
8,245,246,247,248,245,246,247,248,32,32,32
{HlBn} 1950-DATA-".....0
2..03..04..05..06..07..08..09..0A..0
B"
{ErBu} 1960-DATA-"..0C..0D..0E..0F..10..11..1
2..13..14..15..16..17..18..19..1A..1
B"
{DkBu} 1970-DATA-"..1C..1D..1E..1F..20..21..2
2..23..24..25..26..27..28..29..2A..2
B"
{BtCi} 1980-DATA-"..2C..2D..2E..2F..30..31..3
2..33..34..35..36..37..38..39..3A..3
B"
{AmCl} 1990-DATA-"..3C..3D..3E..3F..40..41..4
2..43..44..45..46..47..48..49..4A..4
B"
{PwCn} 2000-DATA-"..4C..4D..4E..4F..50..51..5
2..53..54..55..56..57..58..59..5A..5
B"
{PnCk} 2010-DATA-"..5C..5D..5E..5F..60..61..6
2..63..64..65..66..67..68..69..6A..6
B"
{OuBp} 2020-DATA-"..6C..6D..6E..6F..70..71..7
2..73..74..75..76..77..78..79..7A..7
B"
{OlBr} 2030-DATA-"..7C..7D..7E..7F..80..81..8
2..83..84..85..86..87..88..89..8A..8
B"
{NsBu} 2040-DATA-"..8C..8D..8E..8F..90..91..9
2..93..94..95..96..97..98..99..9A..9
B"
{PvAm} 2050-DATA-"8"

```

## BASIC tutorial... BASIC tutorial... BASIC tutorial... BASIC tutorial...

together to form one string held in the variable NAME\$. Notice that trailing space after 'Troy'? Leave out that, and NAME\$ would look like this:

TroyTempt

BASIC always assumes, quite rightly, that what you type is what you want. If you add a space, BASIC includes it. But forget the space, and BASIC won't add one for you! The moral is to take care with your typing.

How long is that NAME\$? Remember to count the space between the two names. 12 characters, right? But what a drag having to count them, a dull and repetitive task which seems perfectly suited to being solved by the CPC. So try this

```

10 REM This is a program to count the characters in a string
20 INPUT "Please type a string": A$
30 PRINT "The string 'A$' is 'LEN (A$)' characters long."
40 END

```

Don't panic. You've met INPUT and PRINT before. That REM statement in line 10 means simple 'REMark' or 'REMinder'. When BASIC sees REM it ignores everything else on that line. So you can use REM followed by some pertinent information to remind you what a program (or a part of it...) is doing.

Don't laugh. When you're writing hefty slabs of code, it's all too easy to forget what a particular slice of it does!

The only keyword you haven't met in the above program is LEN, and that's what BASIC uses to measure the LENGTH of the string. Now type in the program - watch out for all those single and double quotes in line 30 - and press Return to run it. You'll be prompted like this:

Please type in a string?

Respond by typing, say, your name like this

Fielding Mellish

and press Return. Seconds later, this appears on screen

The string "Fielding Mellish" is 16 characters long.

BASIC counted all the characters in your name, and the space between your forename and surname and told you how many characters were contained within it. Simple, and without application as far as you can see at the moment, but damned clever, right?

In coming months, we'll use such BASIC constructs time and again to provide useful applications - but you can't run before you can... etc, so be patient. You'll get there.

What if you had a whole collection of strings, and you wanted to know the length of each? You'd have to run the program anew each time. There is, however, a way of automating the process, known as the 'loop'. Probably the most basic yet most necessary concept in the whole of programming! And not just in BASIC.

We'll meet it next month.

For now though, there's one other type of string you should know about. The null string. That is, a string which contains absolutely nothing. No spaces, no punctuation, and of course, no characters or numbers.

A\$=""

NAME\$=""

HISCORE\$=""

are all perfect examples of null strings. Assign a null string when you want to clear the contents of some existing string variable.

● Don't forget, you can learn a lot about BASIC and how programs work by studying the Type-Ins printed in the magazine! Some of the code may look a bit 'greek' to start with, but carry on reading this series, and you'll soon be an expert...



Desktop publishing, eh? What's all that about then? Basically it's an excellent way of laying out pages that has revolutionised British publishing over the last eight years. Instead of hot metal and blokes with tweezers in dank basements, newspapers and magazines can now be designed entirely on computer.

As well as reducing costs and increasing control over the finished 'look', the computer DTP boom has led to one other major change: it has empowered 'ordinary people' with the ability to produce decent looking magazines with nothing more than a home computer and a printer. Previously such a task required a warehouse full of equipment that cost tens of thousands of pounds.

Now, anyone can produce professional looking newsletters and magazines from the comfort of their own kitchen. They can use their computer to manipulate pictures and text on screen to produce well-designed pages. Desktop publishing is one of the growth areas of CPC computing at the moment, and if you want to produce a brilliant looking fanzine, or maybe just produce your own headed notepaper, the occasional poster, earn extra marks for that project, or simply write letters with drawings on, then desktop publishing is for you.

So let's size up some of the options facing the CPC owner keen to get into DTP. Like most serious programs, the majority of these require 128K and a disk drive to run. There are quite a few excellent 464-compatible types as well though. Here comes that product info now ...

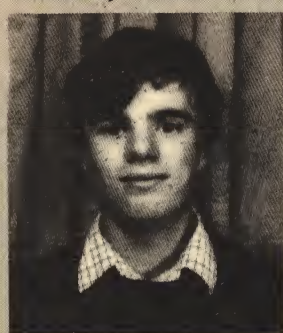
#### MICRO DESIGN PLUS

**£29.99 complete • Campursoft, 16 Slatefield Street, Gallowgate, Glasgow G31 1UA (Telephone 041-554 4735)**

What's going on here then? Turns out that WACCI ace Peter Campbell has come to an arrangement over marketing Siren's weird but wonderful *Micro Design* program (£19.99), together with his own enhancement program for it (£13.75). £29.99 is the all in price for the two.

#### POWER PAGE

**45p + blank disk + sae • Robot PD, 2 Trent Road, Oakham, Rutland LE15 6HF**



The biggest tussle between PD librarians at the moment seems to be a battle over who can produce the best DTP package. We reckon Robot PD's *Power Page* has the edge over its main rival *Pagemaker Deluxe* (by Scull PD), not least because it is totally public domain (ie free).

There are a loads of options available, including a variety of fonts, headlining, graphics, invert, proportional text, autoflow, justification, various text styles, importing of clip art, etc. Utilities such as a text editor, font editor and headline creator are included on the disk, together with a graphics conversion program.

Text can be entered at any point on the page, and there's a selection of printing options. The program is mainly designed for producing A5 size pages. Each page is around takes up an area about two and a half times the screen size. A file compressor keeps the size of pages down to a manageable level.

*Power Page* is very user-friendly, with lots of useful help documentation included (a total of 32K's worth of help files). Sounds great, eh? Now get a load of this - thanks to a special arrangement with the program's prolific writer, Richard Fairhurst, the full uncut version of *Power Page* is going to be on the AA covertape next month. Gadzooks - place that order with your newsagent today, folks!

Though it will work with 64K, *Power Page* needs to be run from disk. So if you haven't got a disk drive, you've got a few weeks to get one. It'll be worth your while, believe us.

# the buyers guide

## desktop publishing

You've read our excellent fanzines feature (p 16) and you want to get into publishing. You could use the scissors and glue technique of course, but there is an easier way to go about it. ADAM PETERS examines the DTP phenomenon and weighs up the options...

*Micro Design* is excellent for drawing, and its square pixels, compared to the more common rectangular ones, means the printout is of a better quality than ordinary DTP packages (*Stop Press* included).

Unfortunately the text-handling facilities were virtually non-existence, making *Micro Design* pretty useless for producing fanzines and the like. For producing diagrams it was fab, but a DTP package it was not (and never claimed to be).

The advancements in *Micro Design Plus* take care of all that. The program has been speeded up, it handles text wonderfully (importing ASCII files is no problem) and it can also be used a print

enhancer for *Stop Press*. The printouts are superb. We hope to bring you a full review in *Technical Forum* very, very soon, so stay tuned...

#### PAGE PUBLISHER

**£25 • SD Microsystems, PO Box 24, Holbeach, Lincs PE12 7JF (Telephone 0406 32252)**

*Page Publisher* has always been the only real commercial challenger to *Stop Press*. The program offers excellent text-handling facilities, including word wrap, columns and justification.

What about the graphics, though? There's a choice of 10 pens and 50 brush patterns, plus sprays, fills and all that other gubbins. And it's very fast too. Best of all, it will work with both 9-pin and 24-pin printers (unlike *Stop Press*, which is designed for 9-pins only).

*Stop Press* has the edge, but *Page Publisher* is definitely a classy program: 24-pin printer owners, start queueing today. Incidentally, SD also produce the £15 art package *Picasso* which can be used in conjunction with *Page Publisher*.

#### PAGE SETTER 64

**£12.50 • SD Microsystems, PO Box 24, Holbeach, Lincs PE12 7JF (Telephone 0406 32252)**

Hurrah, a 464-compatible DTP package, and the only prog in this list that is available on tape (you can get it on disk too, mind). *Page Setter* consists of three separate files; a text editor, a graphics prog, and the main program, which combines the text and graphics into... pages.

Like most cheap DTP packages, *Page Setter* cannot import text from word processors. You are therefore left having to use the primitive text editor

that is included with the package.

*Page Setter 64* is a bit basic, though it does include some advanced features such as the facility to flow text around graphics. But if you're a tape-based 464 owner your choice is limited as far as DTP goes, and this program is more than adequate.

#### PAGEMAKER DELUXE

**£3.50 + blank disk + sae • Scull SL, 44 Echiline Grove, South Queensferry, West Lothian EH30 9RU**

Alan Scully's brainchild, *Pagemaker Deluxe* is a pretty usable desktop publisher which we reviewed in AA73. Deluxe allows you to flow text around graphics, invert or flip sections of the screen, and enter text in any position you like.

The programmer is constantly updating the program (recent editions have included the facility to import all *Stop Press* clip art) and you can get a copy for free when you subscribe to Scully's *CPC Domain* disk fanzine (write to the address above for details).

The editing facilities, as with all packages other than *Stop Press*, are fairly limited. The graphics facilities are reasonably good though, and for the price, *Pagemaker Deluxe* is hard to fault.

#### TINY DESK TOP PUBLISHER

**£5 contribution (shareware) • Scull SL, 44 Echiline Grove, South Queensferry, West Lothian EH30 9RU**

*Tiny Desk Top Publisher* is indeed tiny, and also quite tricky to get the hang of. Previously released commercially, *TDTP* is now available as shareware: you can get a copy for free (though you have to subscribe to *CPC Domain* before you can do so), but you're supposed to send the author some cash if you find the program useful.

When it first appeared, *TDTP* scored points for being so 'competitively priced' (ie cheap). Now that the PD scene is swamped with DTP packages of a similar quality, it's a bit of a donkey. It works and you can do pages with it, but *Power Page* is a better program and it's free.

#### AND THE REST...

There are positively oodles (oodles (n.) - about eight) of DTP packages scurrying round the public domain. Apart from those we've outlined above, there's also Alan Scully's DTP prototype, *Pagemaker Plus*, featured in a special tape-compatible version on the AA76 covertape (back issues are selling out fast).

A recent addition to the fray has been *Edition One*, very similar to *Pagemaker Plus*, but faster and with more graphics functions. "Another desktop publisher? Aarrggghh!" declared *Artificial Intelligence* when this one appeared a few months ago.

Whilst it's certainly true to say that PD DTP packages are reproducing like rabbits, we don't see any harm in that. After all, time was when you couldn't get a DTP package for less than £50. Now you can get half a dozen decent and usable packages for the price of a few stamps.

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ISSUE No. 81 JUNE 1992 £2.50

# AMSTRAD

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#### STOP PRESS

**£65 with mouse, £35 without • MJC Supplies, Unit 2, The Arches, Icknield Way, Letchworth, Herts SG6 1UJ (Telephone 0462 481166)**



The daddy of them all, *Stop Press* is the only full-featured commercial DTP package there is. It was originally released under the name *Pagemaker*, and was full of bugs. These were quickly removed and the prog was re-released under the new name.

*Stop Press* has every option imaginable, plus a few that you'd never think of. You can produce text of any size, there are loads of fonts included, and there's an excellent zoom mode which allows you to edit text and illustrations pixel by pixel.

Brilliant text-editing facilities, the ability to fill shapes with text, patterned fills... *Stop Press* has got the lot! And that's why it is the package to consider first if you're deadly serious about DTP and have got the money.

You might be tempted to go for the cheaper no-mouse option, but be careful: using a joystick with *Stop Press* is very troublesome, since the controls are incredibly sensitive. Even the lightest tap on the 'stick can send the crosshairs halfway across the screen. Gah!



# Sport Sims

The Olympics, Wimbledon, the European footie championships... there's loads of sporting things going down this summer. And if you get bored of what's happening of the telly screen, you can always boot up some sport on the CPC screen. ADAM PETERS reports...

Right. First of all, we'd better point out that if you're expecting some blurb on your favourite motor racing or football games here, you might just as well be waiting for a hand-gliding squirrel. Drive-em-ups (AA76) and footie games (AA79) have already had a Buyers' Guide: Games of their own. Here we'll just be looking at all the other sports that have made their way to the screen of the Straddles (that's Look-in's nickname for the CPC, by the way). And there's a lot, believe you us.

Secondly, we ought to also point out that Amiga Power's games mastermind Stuart Campbell, who we usually get to give us details of the original pre-historic arcade machines that started the genre, wasn't in when we called round this month. So we'll have to skip that bit, and jump straight to the home computer story and a bloke called Daley Thompson.

Dales (as we call him, cos we're good mates) featured in a number of decathlon-inspired multi-sport packages. Daley Thompson's Decathlon featured the actual ten sports involved in Dalie's record-breaking exploits. But Daley Thompson's Supertest didn't. Both packages were stonking hits, being the first packages to feature a double figure number of diff games all bundled together.

The problem with the Daley Thompson games was their stupid joystick-destroying wiggle-back-and-forth-very-fast control method. Later games have tried to avoid this mindless approach to sport simulation.

Some sports have proved more popular than

others: golf and tennis are the most common (and the most successful) of computer sports, whereas things like rugby and cricket are rarer, and in the case of the latter, usually pretty pathetic when they do appear.

There have been loads of multi-game packages (Epyx World of Sports, California Games, Winter Sports, Summer Sports, etc), many of them including very obscure sports like surfing and, er, skateboarding. There have also been a number of compilations, including two very successful Game, Set & Match packs.

Cycling games, of either the motorised or pedal-power variety, have also abounded, though few (with the exception of the reasonable Super Hang On and BMX Simulator) have been much cop.

There's also been a fair few computer renditions of faithful old British pub games, like darts (180, Wacky Darts) and snooker (Steve Davis Snooker and, er, 3D Pool). But while some have looked to more obscure sports to base games on, others have just invented new games.

These invented games have included weirdsome futuristic American Football clones, such as Speedball/Cyberball, together with even more violent 'sports', such as Smash TV (which doesn't make the top ten because we classified it as a Shoot-em-up).

Sport sims - love 'em or hate 'em, you can't change the way they feel. (What the hell are you on about, Adam? - ed.)

## top 10

### 1) BOBSLEIGH (DIGITAL INTEGRATION)

Frighteningly fast and tactically terrific, Bobsleigh can be summed up in a single word, and that word is 'mrega top boss ace'. **91%** (AA24)

### 2) JACK NICKLAUS GOLF (ACCOLADE)



The best golf sim, with awesomely detailed graphics and three courses to battle round. **89%** (AA53)

### 3) WORLD CLASS LEADERBOARD (US GOLD)

The second best golf sim, with neat graphics and trees and bunkers galore. **84%** (AA26)

### 4) WORLD CLASS RUGBY (AUDIOGENIC)

Brilliant rugby sim that arrived just after last year's World Cup. Simply the best. **87%** (AA75)

### 5) CYBERBALL (DOMARK)

Hi-tech space age American Football type thingy, with guns and stuff. **82%** (AA58)

### 6) 3D POOL (FIREBIRD)

The best green baize game you can get for the Straddles: the two player mode is ace. **80%** (AA47)

### 7) 3D INTERNATIONAL TENNIS (PALACE)

This 'un looks a bit nob - the line drawing graphics hardly draw you in - but the playability is spot on. **73%** (AA75)

### 8) WINTER GAMES (US GOLD)

A brilliant bunch of snow-based sports. The bobsleigh bit is the only dodgy game on here. **90%** (AA9)

### 9) WWF (OCEAN)



Somewhat repetitive gameplay, but the large array of moves and the fun of playing your fave wrestling stars makes up for that! **90%** (AA77)

### 10) LEADERBOARD (ACCESS)

The first classic golf-em-up. Very limited by recent standards, but still super playable. **83%** (AA21)

### best sport sim

### Bobsleigh (DIGITAL INTEGRATION)

We weren't really sure whether to chuck this in the Sport Sims category or the Simulations category - that's how fab and gnarly the actual sleighing bits are. The white blur or snow shoots towards you, and it's a case of some seriously tricky hand-fudging and some majorly intricate joystick work to see you through.



Sorry this picture is a bit blurry (the actual difficulty, don't you know). Bobsleigh is a classic.

Add to this some excellent strategy/management aspects - you can pick teams, buy equipment, train (a bit of joystick waggling boosts your fitness) and tool up your bob - and you get a game that can only be adequately defined using the word 'fabbo'.

The 'feel' of the arcade section has never been beaten by any other simulator, and the sheer sense of speed as you take a bend is totally exhilarating. All this adds up to a totally brilliant combination of strategy and simulation, and a game we advise you to hunt out wherever you can. Most excellent, as those righteous time-travelling dudes Bill and Ted would say.

Next month's **Sega Power** (the magazine with bags of Plymouth Argyle) makes hay while the sun shines in the six yard box! There are some wicked **FREE** earphones on the front too!

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**Pukka!**



# Next month in AA



**We've kidnapped Bonnie Langford. Buy the July issue of AA or we'll release her...**

July  
issue on sale  
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## How to become a professional programmer

Ever wanted to write your own games and see them on the shelves of your local computer store? Fancy making a bit of cash doing something fun? Maybe you've got a good idea for a game and want to find out how you go about convincing a software house to produce it? Next month's main feature reveals all...

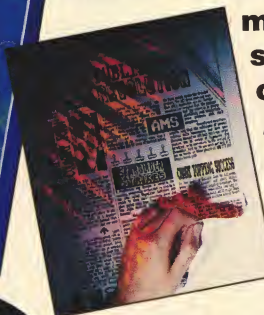


## Programming Seymour

*Seymour in the Wild West* has reached the programming stage, and our game development series takes another train to another town to meet the mysterious programmer and pick up some useful tips...

## Mad about magazines

Our fanzines special issue isn't the end of our home publishing blitz. Next month look out for the start of a new series called *Hold the Front Page!* PLUS Dr Fegg's guide to producing a CPC fanzine PLUS the brilliant DTP package *Power Page* on the covertape!



## State of the Art

*Buyers' Guide* reviews and rates, tries and tests, examines and eats (eats? - ed) its way through a box full of CPC art packages. We sort out the scribbles from the masterpieces, and provide some tips for art on the Amstrad.

## Games galore!

There aren't many big game reviews in this issue, are they? Not to worry, we'll have loads next month - including a massive review of *The Addams Family*!



**Plus We really, truly, honestly don't know what else (it's still only April, you see)**

## back page competition

### don't miss it!

Next month's **AMSTRAD ACTION** is likely to be an absolute stonker. You wouldn't want to miss out, would you? Don't risk being AA-less in four weeks' time. Cut out this form, write on it, and give it to your caring, sharing newsie.

Dear kindly Newsagent person, I don't want to go to hell, so please reserve *Amstrad Action* for me every month, beginning with the July issue, out on Thursday 18th June (allegedly).

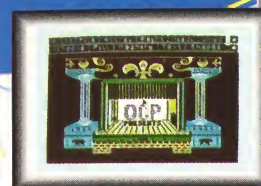
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We've got a caption competition for you this month, readers. Take a look at this rather puzzling snap of Uncle Rod's recent car park meeting with Ollie and Lam from Commodore Format, and jot down what you reckon denim-clad Ollie is saying. Write to Back Page Compo (AA81) at the usual Bath address. Closing date: June 18th. Prize: £10. No-one got Maryanne's teddy bear's name right last month: he's called Hugo. The £10 goes to Tanya Winston of London NW11 who suggested, er, 'Pipplethwaite' (oh dear).



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